

THE YOUNGEST DISCIPLE

by the same author

BURMESE SILVER

THE
YOUNGEST DISCIPLE

by
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To
RANI and PRASANTA
my fellow pilgrims
through the Buddha's countryside

PREFACE

Treating of a life which is in some degree sacred to all mankind, this tale is necessarily based on Buddhist tradition and canonical books, which imposed something of their style on all but the more “secular” episodes. But the story found its own way for itself, and into it are woven the rustic philosophy and folk-lore of northern India, persistent through all changes. Its setting is the open countryside of hills and forests, villages and parklike spaces, which was as intimate a part of Buddha’s daily life as Galilee, half a millennium later, was of Our Lord’s.



It was a valley cut deep in the mountains, as by a scimitar, not straight but curvingly. It had only one entrance, and finished under a precipitous rock-wall. That wall ran all along the cleft's northern side, and was pitted with caves. The southern side was a slope, which lifted gently and easily away in forest. Between them murmured a brook, the Kundalini, or Coiled Serpent. It had now little water, but abundance of fresh never-ceasing music.

A boy made his way down—after a careful glance at the cattle which he was guarding—to a pool where the scanty waters gathered themselves, pausing in a saucer they had scooped in the black soil. In the forest at his back was an opening, the tall trees standing at a distance and leaving a region of scrub and low tough grasses. If the cattle remained here they were, he thought, safe: the evening was still sunny, and wild beasts

would not be stirring for two hours yet. For the time of the year, mid-April, the day had been endurable, but to be out in it since dawn had left him tired and hot. Laying aside his loin-cloth Panchkori entered the pool.

The lean rib-staring cattle, rasping steadily at the dry hard herbage, heard the splash of water, and first one, then another, looked up. It seemed to set up a train of thinking and approval; they too had endured the dragging hours and burning sky; and they began to converge on their herdsman. Presently his cows were strung out along the Kundalini, drinking or standing in its shallow stream; he had a concourse around and in his own pool.

He was a herd-boy. Panchkori, "Five* Cowries", was his name, given him to ward off the evil spirits that watch the lives and ways of mortals, to snatch away the things they value highly. Five Cowries—five of the diminutive wrinkled shells that by courtesy were considered cash of a sort and as such were flung as largess when bodies were taken to the pyre, and as such were left in the dust ungathered even by lepers and beggars—that was his value, his parents had declared; and the demons and gods, the Guardians of the Six Regions and the Ten Directions,

had heard and noted it. So he had lived till now, when he was sixteen years of age, and no evil one had thought it worth while to vex his family by carrying him off.

It might have been thought that perhaps they had struck at him indirectly when his wife died two months ago. But it would not have been thought by Panchkori or his parents. Whether it had been good or evil luck, Somalata's death had come because of her own thread of actions. These had been strung together, birth following birth, until they had come to fruit in those three days and nights of fever which had ended with the wasted little body's last journey, to the place of burning. The husband at present was without a wife.

He understood his forlornness and insignificance, which his name witnessed. They did not trouble him, for they were marks on most people in the society around him. Everything in life had driven them in on his consciousness, till they were accepted like movement and breathing.

They were to be emphasized afresh this evening, however. He was absorbed in his watching of the hillside opposite—the darker spots which showed where the caves pitted them—the long

grey clusters which he knew were nests of the wild bees. He was wondering whether already at the mouth of one of those caves an early-stirring panther or even a tiger might be looking towards him and his cattle. He had better be driving them homeward, to the shelter of the village nearly a mile away, in the dry bare hollow where the plain began. He did not hear the movement of a person hidden and covered by the cattle; their rasping tugs drowned any crackle of a broken twig beneath a barefooted tread. He was taken too completely by surprise even to emit a cry when a hand was placed across his face and his voice stifled. Strong hands pulled his body backward out of the water, and he was swiftly trussed up with ropes.

His captor slung him on the back of a bull, and he and his cattle were driven across the Kundalini and towards the caves. The cattle were presently herded together inside one of these, and he, himself, still gagged and bound, was tossed down by the entrance. Apparently no one was going to bother about him further—for the present, that is. He was still Panchkori: an insignificant item in a larger haul.

Looking round the cave he saw that the haul had been complete. Cows and goats and

buffaloes, every beast in his section of the village herding, they were here. His colleague in this herding, the cousin who had been valued at a slightly higher rate, Satkori ("Seven Cowries"), lay gagged and bound beside him.

Slowly, as the sunlight began to die out, first in the valley's depth and then on the forest slopes beyond the Kundalini, his thoughts, which were dark enough to begin with, took on the gloom of a deeper terror. Nothing, however appalling, could be ruled out as impossible in this lonely place and hour. They might have fallen in with a band of *rakshasas*, flesh-eating demons. What else would dwell in these caves, known to be the home of tiger and bear and panther? Night would first completely fall, and then the two boys would be torn limb from limb and devoured, quick and full of agony.

This terror-striking thought died down as he noticed that the *rakshasas* were beginning to light fires before the cave. That must be to scare off tiger and panther, prowling abroad in the darkness, from this hollow packed full of food for them. This meant that the *rakshasa* theory must be abandoned; *rakshasas* did not care about panther or tiger, they themselves were far more terrible and frightening. This realization

should have brought comfort, but did not.

Panchkori could hear Satkori sobbing with dread of what the darkness was about to bring. A man entered the cave, to take a look round and see that the cattle were all safe. He noticed Satkori and laid a stick across his bare buttocks. The boy writhed and turned over, but could not get the relief of crying out in his pain. The man kicked him, and turning to Satkori's companion beat him also. He enjoyed their silent misery, and after a stern order to lie quiet went out smiling.

Another hour passed. All was black outside, except for the flitting sparks of the fire-flies, swimming into sudden points of brightness and swiftly dimming again. Then the two boys saw far off a flare through the foliage. It flickered out; shone again; then deepened to a steady glow moving upward and towards them. They heard the sound of a horse's nostrils, blown out in nervousness, and the clatter of hooves on stones. A group of men surrounded by a ring of torches were approaching the caves. Horsemen and footmen together, they were about a dozen in all. They reached the caves, and the riders dismounted.

The torches lit up the face of the leader, and

the boys, peering out from their prison, saw him clearly. There was no longer any possibility of question as to who their captors were.

That face could never be mistaken, though one had never seen it. It was Eklochon, "the One-Eyed", the dread of the whole Kingdom of Magadha. The eye that was left compensated the blankness of the one which had been put out by a spear-thrust, it shone with so malignant a keenness, missing nothing and gathering up all within vision. If this were not sufficient identification, there was the famous scar that showed where the spear had slipped and opened the cheek to the nose. Above all, there were the marks of wickedness: the glare of cruelty and passion and of power unchecked by fear of hell or pity for man.

King Bimbisara had sent out his armies to kill this man-tiger, and a brief happiness had spread through the country of Magadha at the report that they had been successful. Then it was known that they had merely routed Eklochon from his haunts, and not killed him. That had happened before; and always the robber had recovered strength after a period of hiding, and had come back stronger and fiercer than ever. People spoke of Magadha as the Land Which Has Two

Monarchs; and of the two the one that mattered was Eklochon.

This, then, was to be his refuge for a while, till he could gather his followers again to a head: these caves in the wilderness, beside the Kundalini's waters that flow softly and shadowed with trees and long waving grasses.

Panchkori writhed in sudden agony. He had been roused by the prick of a spear in the fleshy part of his arm. Lest he should misunderstand the indication that his attention was asked for, the prick was repeated elsewhere. He flung away, as far as his bound limbs permitted, to where the wall of the cave might protect at least part of his naked body. Satkori had received similar treatment. Their gags were taken off and they were offered some water. Then the gags were replaced.

They knew now, though not in its terrifying and anticipated details, the fate before them. If the robber chief needed them they would be made compulsorily his followers; they would herd the cattle he had stolen, and later would serve in his band. Perhaps King Bimbisara would one day capture them and impale them. If the robber chief felt they were now a nuisance and peril, then he would kill them.

The robbers ate their meal. Guards were set

for the night, and the rest of the band disposed themselves for sleep.

Over the forest hung a waning moon. The wilderness and its paths were speckled with half-light.

Suddenly the guards shook with amazement and fear, the drowsers leapt to their feet. Outside, by the cave's entrance, stood a man who had made his way through the dimness unseeing and unseen.

It was no wonder that the guards' spears, lifted to strike him down, were arrested. What figure but that of a *devata* of the wilderness would have made his way through this tangle of serpent-haunted silence where tigers and panthers were abroad? He had come to inquire of these mortals who had broken into his kingdom, bringing anger and terror that were not of his world!

His hair was dark, though the face it enshrined was passing into the time when greyness appears. The body had no fault or shadow of a fault. The eyes were quiet with pity. Surely the first thoughts of those who saw him were right! Only one of the Immortal Gods would have confronted that clash of fiercely gripped weapons and the ring of cruel hard faces with such majesty of utter fearlessness.

Fear that follows all our ways: that is the shadow and proof of our mortality: that stores up the memories of pain watched or experienced: that whispers of hell and judgement when we are dying: had fallen from him, as from a swimmer rising out of a stream the water falls, shed from his limbs.

You may tell the Immortal Gods in two ways. Their eyes gaze before them, unwinking and unmoving. And their forms cast no image; no, not even at noonday.

They are not as we are, every day and all our days followed by a mockery of ourselves—the self that is past yet will not die, the self that is to come and is so disquieting. They stand in their unsullied and unshadowed completeness.

The man looked at Eklochon, whose limbs trembled.

Then his glance fell on the two boys, lying miserable in their bonds. Without a word he pointed, and the gesture was a command. They were freed and stood up, Satkori timidly and out of sight. Panchkori came forward, drawn by the eyes that awed him.

The man spoke at last.

“Why hast thou come to this place?”

“Because of our great fear,” answered the

robber chief. "King Bimbisara's soldiers are seeking us."

"Thou hast not escaped from fear," the man replied, pointing to the guards still standing before the cave and the lifted weapons. "While King Bimbisara lives and while thou livest, fear shall cling to thee always. Thou hast come to this refuge, which is no refuge, not knowing that an enemy stronger and more unpitying than the King whom thou darest is following thee night and day."

The cry of a leopard, exultant because he knows the prey is his and is where it cannot escape him, sent a horror through the night outside. It shook every one of the listening band, except the man in the ascetic's saffron cloak. He had moved a little aside now, to where the moon cast from him some faint shadow of a shadow, and all knew that he was not of the Immortal Gods that cast no shadow. But with knowledge of who he was awe deepened, that a man should have ventured through these ways alone and at night, to speak with the robber in his panic and the cruelty that is born of panic.

"What enemy, Lord?" asked Eklochon.

"Thine own evil deeds. They shall surely hunt thee to thy doom at last. Though a man fly

through the wildernesses of all the Three Worlds, and though he shake off pursuing men and demons and the gods themselves, these pursuers he shall not shake off. When his heart thinks itself secure and at ease to enjoy itself, with a sudden bursting of doors and bolts and bars they shall find their way to him. When he is dying and his voice and strength sink low, he shall hear them whispering as they await his spirit about to be dragged to judgement. Answer me, evil man: what dost thou fear that King Bimbisara will do to thee when he finds thee?"

"He has sworn that he will impale me, Lord."

"And after death what will the enemy within thyself do to thee—when thou shalt find no hidden cleft in the mountains where thou mayst hope to hide for a season?"

"That I cannot say, Lord."

"Hast thou seen a robber die?"

"Surely. At the breaking of the rains last year I entered the city of Vesali disguised as a merchant of brass, at the hour of execution, when they impaled one who had robbed a temple. In the afternoon the rains came violently, and continued so for three days without intermission. Yet when I passed the place again, three morn-

ings later, the man was still crying out in his agony!" The sweat stood on the robber's face as he remembered.

"Thou art assuredly then a man devoid of sense! Thou art like a deer that has heard the cry of evil beasts abroad in the forest, yet continues beside the stream because it is pleasant, and takes no thought as to how he should escape the death that is hunting him. The gods have sent thee the Five Messengers of Warning, thou hast seen the Five Visions of Weakness and Suffering. Thou hast seen the child in its helplessness: the sick man with brain and body disordered: the old man whom others must help, for he cannot help himself: the criminal who is hung aloft in his pain to be a terror to others: and the dead man whose body must be burnt lest it defile its fellow dust that still walks the streets!"

"All these I have seen. It is true, Lord."

"Thou hast seen them! Thou hast seen them, yet hast not spoken thus with thyself: 'I too am subject to old age and dying. I am a slave to the Threefold Dominion: of birth, of growing old, of dying.' These evil deeds, because of which thou hast now fled into the heart of these mountains, were they done by thy mother?"

"By no means. They were mine, Lord."

"They were not wrought by thy father. Nor thy brothers. Nor thy friends and companions. They were *thine*! Not in heaven, nor in the depths of the ocean, nor in the secret fastnesses of the hills, nor in the eagle's eyrie or the tiger's den, not in any place, in earth or beyond earth, wilt thou find a place where thou canst hide thyself from these deeds that are seeking thee. As surely as a calf will find its mother in a thousand cows, so surely will a deed find out its doer."

"It is well said, Lord."

"Thou hast sought to hide thyself in the clefts of these mountains. Let us think that thou art a man travelling in a strange country. Of him his friends and relations think with love and with hope for his safe return. It is thus that our good deeds think concerning us while we travel in this strange land of the body. And as the joyful welcome of family and friends awaits the traveller who returns home, so our good deeds surely await us when we pass over the stream of death. But our evil deeds await us otherwise, as a pack of ravening wolves await a tired stag which with pain and exhaustion of limbs has passed a river in flood. That river is awaiting *thee*, Eklochon, and thy evil deeds have swelled its waters. And

beyond death their fruit awaits thee, which thou shalt eat in all its bitterness.”

The robber fell at his feet, with a great cry. In the forest behind a black shadow showed, as a tigress paused to wonder who and what was here. At the robber’s cry she vanished with a heavy cracking of sticks and rustling of leaves.

In the silence which followed, the Lord’s glance fell on the two boys again, and he beckoned them forward. In an impulse of adoration Panchkori bent down and touched his feet.

The Lord raised him, and asked: “Dost thou seek a refuge?”

Panchkori’s voice was low and husky. “I seek a refuge, Lord.”

“Thou shalt find it—for I think the day has been hard for thee! Thou shalt say the words I give thee.”

Panchkori said them: slowly, clearly, firmly. “I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Law. I take refuge in the Assembly.”

The Blessed One smiled as he finished. “He has found salvation before thee, Eklochon. Nay” (putting by a movement to touch his feet and to take the vow also) “I will show thee a way to save thyself from the hunters that are following

thee—when the new day dawns. Now let each man sleep.”

He paused, then added: “As for these whom thou hast led into paths of evil, to-morrow they shall return to their homes, there to enter on the Noble Eightfold Path which I will show them. And the first part of that Path which they must tread is this: Right Livelihood.” To Satkori he said: “To-morrow thou shalt take back these cattle to those who own them. And thou shalt say that thy companion has joined the Brethren of the Yellow Robe.”

He turned to the forest behind him, about to re-enter it. The robber chief sought to dissuade him.

“Hast thou no fear, Lord?”

“Fear of what?”

“Of the demons of the wilderness? Of the wild creatures? But now a tigress went by. Without doubt she is lurking in the darkness.”

“Seven years, Disciple, I lived in the forest—when as a black-haired boy entering on man’s estate I left my parents grieving, and put on the ascetic’s robe and became a wanderer. Another seven years since have I been a wanderer, sleeping in caves or under the boughs of broad trees. What room is left for fear?”

“Yet sleep here, in this cave, as we shall! I myself, Lord, will guard thee.”

“No man shall guard me. I shall sleep in the forest’s protection, and my sleep will be deep and unfearing.”

Panchkori found himself following. The Lord turned and looked full at his face. “Hast *thou* no fear?”

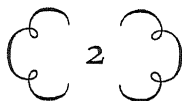
“None, Lord.”

“None?”

“At thy command I have taken refuge from fear.”

“Come then, Ascetic!”

They strode out towards the Kundalini, and in shelter of a tall simul they gathered together agnus-castus leaves and made two beds. They slept beside the murmuring waters.



Panchkori was awake next morning before the dawn; and fear came upon him, in the grey rustling hour that precedes the Indian day. He could see the humps of jungle scrub darken

out into shadows, and knew that some beast was gliding to its lair, flattening itself to merge into the darkness which the earth threw up in its bushes.

In the air above him were those swift mysterious passings, which come like the winging of arrows from the bows of forest spirits: the flying of night-hawk home, and of heron and egret to their early feeding-grounds.

He knew also that these wilderness depths were the haunt of uncounted demons: dwellers in tree and cleft and beside the murmuring Kundalini. You look, fascinated, into the densely clustered and massed darkness; and a fiery eye that was watching you glimmers into terrible brightness.

In the air was a stirring, as an inner core of cold sweet movement swept up sighing from the river that sang its way through the valley. The cold sweet breath came up to the boy like a living thing; and looking up he saw that the first streaks of morning were starting to flicker on the mountain's shoulder.

Terror and sense of helplessness took hold of limbs and mind.

Then his eyes fell on the figure of the Lord, sitting upright in the hero-seat of meditation.

And the boy remembered: he had taken refuge from fear, fear could touch him no longer. "I take refuge in the Buddha," he reminded himself. "I take refuge in the Law. I take refuge in the Assembly."

At the sound of his voice the Lord turned his face. He saw the boy's face, dim still in the now fast-brightening air; and he rose, and came to his disciple.

They bathed in Kundalini, the Prince Siddhartha and the herdsman's brat. And like the Immortal Gods stood the Blessed One upright, in the stream that broke into crystal lines about him: his body a lily whose own inner law of perfection has lifted it from the root where it slept in darkness. Now that life that sleeps coiled in the root, and coiled in the inmost self of each one of us, what else is it but the coiled Kundalini, the hidden serpent of truth and reality? Within us it remains, in deep scarce-stirring slumber. Only in the Blessed One had it arisen to joy and strength and eternity of life.

The Lord asked his disciple if he had known fear in the night that was over.

"I did not know fear, Lord. I slept."

"Didst thou not know that the tiger and his mate were abroad? And the serpents that seek

their prey by night, and kill the man whose foot touches them?"

"I knew most assuredly, Lord. For I have kept my cattle in these forests. And I knew fear", he admitted, "when I awoke in the darkness early. Because I saw that thou wast no longer beside me."

"Then when death has taken me from thee, and I am no longer beside thee, fear will sweep down on thee like a tempest!"

"No doubt that will come to pass, Lord."

The Lord therefore gathered together his new-found disciples, Panchkori and the robber chief and his band; and he told them the Parable of the Wild Things of the Forest.

"This House of Nine Doors in which we dwell is like some hut in the vast wilderness. Around it stretch the forests of time and space, as around us here stretch these forests of sal and kul and shegun, mile upon mile, in which no man's foot dare go, except he keep to the well-beaten tracks. And within these forests prowl the savage things that live on blood: the tigers of anger and hate and fear and desire. Are not these Wild Things creatures of ravin and cruelty?"

"Assuredly, Lord! They would drink our blood—even as the tigress whose cubs are starv-

ing will drink the blood of the deer that she can slay!"

"Yes, and there is love of self, which is the cruellest of all. And within the House of Nine Doors sits the soul in awe and trembling, as it hears the Wild Things roar through the forest's darkness and ever and anon catches the sound of them snuffing about its walls, seeking an entrance. And from the mountains above it sweep down the storms of frailty and disease; and as the years pass this House of Nine Doors weakens and crumbles—as a hut on which many rains have beaten and suns have burnt steadfastly down, drying its strength and moisture away. Last of all comes death, the tempest that ends all things here."

"Lord, it is true!"

"Then the House of Nine Doors lies shattered, and men pluck together sticks and set fire to destroy it. But within the House of Nine Doors, so long as life remains, sits the soul—Atman, the Dweller in the Innermost—seeing all, hearing all. To him nerves and brain and blood send in their report, like servants who carry tidings to their master. When thou hast encamped in any place, Eklochon, what has been thy custom? Has it been to sleep without a guard?"

"By no means, Lord. I have had my guards and sentries posted to watch all ways by which King Bimbisara's army might be seeking me."

"Even so sits Atman, and his spies watch at all extremities of his kingdom, like watchers whom a king has set upon his frontiers and upon all roads by which his foes might steal into his country. Now the man whose life and thoughts are full of sin waits within the House of Nine Doors, and his mind is full of wailing and despair. For the Wild Things of the Forest—what Things are those, Eklochon?"

"They are anger and hate and desire and fear. It is true! I have heard them, and have seen them, Lord!"

"These Wild Things are at his doors, and seeking to force an entry. But the man who has taken refuge in my Law, for him the Dweller in the Innermost sits in perfect peace and safety. He is like a king whose warders have dropped portcullis and closed the iron-spiked gates. While those keep his strong fortress, he can rest and take his ease. Even so, Panchkori, after the night that is past shouldst *thou* have awakened from sleep—knowing that thy soul was in a sure refuge!"

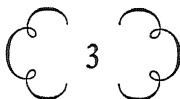
At a signal from the Blessed One they rose;

and as the sun showed itself above the mountains that shut in the long deep hidden valley they repeated the words of truth:

*"I take refuge in the Buddha.
I take refuge in the Law.
I take refuge in the Assembly."*

And Eklochon the robber became even as Panchkori the herd-boy.

And the Dweller in the Innermost, hearing those words of truth, stirred thrice with exceeding blissfulness, then settled to his meditation again.



In the cool of the evening, they made their way down the valley. As the road made a turn, before the valley dropped steeply into the plain, Panchkori stood very still, his eyes fixed on a point below them.

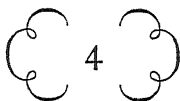
The Lord read his thought, and asked a question. "When a calf is new-born, the mother being in the forest at graze, what dost thou do, Disciple? Dost thou move it back to the stall?"

“By no means, Lord. It is too weak to stir. We set a guard about it, and by night have fires, to keep off the wild things. On the third day the calf can be taken to its stall in the village.”

“Even so shalt thou too return to thy people, and assuredly have speech with them. But now, come! and abide with me!”

“I will come, Lord. For I have taken refuge in thee and the Law and Assembly.”

The afternoon light, finding an open space in the trees, fell on this turn of the pathway, and they journeyed through brightness. Then the way descended abruptly, into the darkness of dense forest.



Day following day, in the midday halt the Blessed One expounded the Law and Doctrine. On the third day the Lord spoke the Discourse of Turning the Wheel of the Truth.

“Seven years, Disciples, I lived in the forests and kept the breath within me by feeding on roots and bark of trees. The winds blew round my body, and through the long black nights of

Ashar the rains fell hissing. When the sun sucked up the moisture, the wilderness steamed as with smoke from reed-smothered fire. My limbs became shrunken like withered reeds, my hips hardened to a camel's hoof, my backbone became like a knotted rope, bone after bone knit together with the dry tautness of my skin. As in a rain-shattered house the rafters above it are all aslope, so with the extremity of famine became my ribs. As in a well many fathoms down the glitter of the water shows dully (like a serpent's scales when he stirs sluggishly in deep shadow), so in the sockets of my eyes the brightness of my eyeballs, sunken as in that well the water is sunken, all but vanished. As a gourd cut from its stem and left uncooked in the sun grows rotten and shrunken, so shrank and rotted the skin of my head. When I placed my hand upon the surface of my belly I felt my backbone, and when I ran it along my limbs the hair, rotted at its roots, came away. Tell me, Disciples, was that manner of life one that approves itself to the thought of the wise?"

"It does not approve itself, Lord."

"That is the way of self-torture, Disciples. It is full of torment and pain. It is ignoble and without use. There is another way, Disciples, which

many use. The eye rolls with intoxication, the limbs are softly clad and richly fed, they grow large and luxurious, the body lolls at its ease on deep down of couches or is borne in chariots which others drive and which strong stately horses draw. Is that way of life a good one?"

His glance rested on Panchkori, who answered: "It is not a good way, Lord. It leads the soul that takes it to the pit of hell."

"It is the Way of Illusion, Lord," said the robber chief. "And they that take it will surely reach the bottom-most hell, even as this boy has said."

"Panchkori has said well," agreed the others.

"What then is the more excellent way?" asked Eklochon.

"It is the Middle Way," answered the Lord. "It is the Way which gives sight and strength and everlasting peace. This, O Ascetics, is the Middle Way: the Noble Eightfold Path of Right Thinking, Right Planning, Right Speaking, Right Action, Right Livelihood—there is a way for thee, Eklochon! Was thy way of livelihood the Path of Right Livelihood?"

Eklochon shuddered. "It was the Path of Evil Livelihood, Lord. And I know that the cruel deeds which I wrought are now seeking me by

night and day, as King Bimbisara is seeking me! There is no escape for me, in this life or the next!" The robber cried out aloud in his despair.

The Blessed One laid a hand upon him to calm his spirit.

"Yes, they are seeking thee, Eklochon, these evil deeds of thine! But there is this comfort for thee—that *thou* art now seeking *them*! These evil deeds of thine, when they come upon thee at last, they will come upon no fugitive who is crying to the forests to hide him, and the hills to fall on him for a cover. But upon an ascetic, a man wearing the saffron robe of harmlessness and happiness and peace. And he will say: 'I know whom thou art seeking, and behold he is before thee! he will stir no hand or foot to avoid thee!' Then the Avengers will say: 'But this is not the man we sought! For that man was an evil-doer, his face was dark with lust and anger; and this man's face is the face of one in whose mind calm has made its abode.' So they will pass by thee unhurting, as a king's messengers of justice pass by those who have done no wickedness but go about their daily tasks, in field or house or market-place."

At the Blessed One's words great quiet fell

upon those who listened. The Blessed One continued to expound the Excellent Way.

"What path is the Noble Eightfold Path?" he asked, and again his glance fell upon Panchkori.

"Right Thinking, Right Planning, Right Speaking, Right Action—and thou wast telling Eklochon here that it was also the Path of Right Livelihood," said the boy.

"It is also the Path of Right Effort, Right Frame of Mind, Right Ecstasy. This, Ascetics, is the Noble Eightfold Path."

Then those ascetics, being right-minded and desirous to be free of the lusts of the world and from wicked feelings, repeated these words of the Lord, as they sat in shadow of a mighty tree while the forest slept around them, drugged with the deep brightness of the noontide.

"Right Thinking. Right Planning. Right Speaking. Right Action. Right Livelihood. Right Effort. Right Frame of Mind. Right Ecstasy. This is the Noble Eightfold Path."

Without doubt they Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream.



That night, as they lay down to rest in an open space surrounded by trees, the blackness about them filled up with points of light, and there came from it the clash of weapons. The robbers would have sprung to their feet in the greatness of their fear and have drawn swords to confront whoever came. But the Lord by a sign bade them be still.

Out of the trees came then Nilkantha, the general of King Bimbisara's army, and behind him a troop of men armed and carrying ropes and fetters. Seeing the Blessed One, Nilkantha and those who were with him bowed low in obeisance.

"Whom seekest thou, Nilkantha?" the Lord demanded.

"I seek robbers, and rebels against King Bimbisara's authority."

"Look well and see if by chance they are here."

"They are here, Lord," said his officers.

With a mighty cry of terror the robber chief sprang to his feet, and leapt forward with sword drawn. The Lord confronted him, and bade him

be still; and to put his sword back in its sheath.

"There are no robbers or rebels here, Nilkantha," he said. "As a snake shrinks back into its hole and is no more seen, so the man whom thou wast seeking has at my command shrunk back into the ascetic who stands before thee. Is it an ascetic that thou art seeking?"

"By no means, Lord. It is a robber, and robbers who follow him and do his bidding; and these evil men I see before me."

"What is thy will concerning them?"

"It is the King's order that we bring them bound before him, and it is the King's purpose that they shall die in sight of all men, and by torments such that no man hereafter shall even think of their deeds without trembling and sweat of the forehead."

"Return therefore to your King, and tell him: 'Those whom thou wast seeking have been seized, and by a captor from whom they shall win no release. They are the prisoners of the Most Excellent Law.'"

"King Bimbisara will assuredly kill me if I return without them. He will kill also these others who do my bidding."

"He will assuredly kill us," cried out those others.

“Tell me, wherefore does King Bimbisara seek these men? Is it in order that deeds of wickedness may continue, and the people of his dominions live in exceeding fear?”

“By no means, Lord. He would kill these men in order that his people may live in quietness and security.”

“Tell him: ‘Those who were robbers are now ascetics. Where came men armed and with weapons that dripped and drank blood, henceforward will come saffron-robed monks, preaching and treading the Noble Eightfold Path.’ Say to him: ‘The Tathāgata has met these men in their way to destruction, and that way they keep no more.’ ”



Then the Blessed One preached the Parable of the Man who Fled on the Path to Destruction.

“There was a man, Ascetics, who fled from a tigress whose cub he had slain. And it came to pass, as he fled with the greatness of his fear upon him like a fiery goad, that another stood in

his way, and asked him: 'Whither fleest thou and in such torment?' And the man answered: 'Stay me not, for a wild beast whom I have wronged is hard behind me.' But that other said: 'And before thee is the steepness of the mountain, a precipice on whose rocks, falling sheer a thousand fathoms, thy limbs shall be broken like sticks of dried-up reed!' Then the man said: 'Even a precipice is better than a mad tigress.' But he who had come to save him made answer: 'I will pluck thee from the peril of both. Only stand firm behind me.' So he stood firm behind his friend, and when the tigress appeared angry out of the forest she saw before her not one man but two. And she saw, moreover, that this second man was not the man who had fled in such terror, but a man silent and with his drawn weapon in hand, one who would assuredly not shrink from the contest nor be beaten down by any power of hers. She saw, too, that that other man also was not the man who had fled before her, for that man had been weak as a child in resolution, with his breath coming in gusts as of dying and his voice ever and anon raised in terror. This man was quiet, and stood behind his protector, ready to second him in all that he bade. So the tigress, growling and in her own

turn affrighted, went back into the forest. Tell me, Nilkantha, to whom did the man's life belong—to the tigress who would have slain him or to the friend who had saved him?"

"Beyond doubt he was the bonds slave of the friend who had saved him."

"Even so, Nilkantha, behold this man, once a robber but now my ascetic. I met him when he was fleeing from the tigress of his anger and lust and evil propensities, and when before him yawned the gulf of his own wicked deeds, which would dash him to the nethermost hell. Say to King Bimbisara: 'The Tathāgata met such and such a man as he fled from death to death; and midway of his course to destruction he bade him stand and be saved.' Say to King Bimbisara: 'Those who were robbers are become ascetics, and thy kingdom is deepened in strength and power.'"

That night, therefore, they slept in the open space surrounded by trees, and next morning came to a city early. And it was the day of the market, when sellers of cloth had come from all parts. So Nilkantha, from the money which King Bimbisara had given him to bring the robbers bound to his presence, bought for them instead the saffron-hued robes of monks, and

the Blessed One sent them each one to his own home in his village, there to Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine, each one living pure and free from wickedness, in his neighbours' sight. Only Eklochon, the cruel robber, and Panchkori, the herd-boy, the Blessed One kept near his person.



They came, as night was falling, to Rajgaha. Word of the Blessed One's nearness had reached the city, and long before they saw its towers they were met by two ascetics walking along the road. And presently there followed these first two a band of five hundred ascetics, all wearing the saffron robes of the Doctrine and gazing out upon Illusion with the Pure Eye of Enlightenment.

The two whom they first met walking were Sariputta and Moggallana. Brothers they, in the field of battle for truth! And this was the manner of their Finding Enlightenment.

Brothers of the search for truth, they wandered long, and from teacher to teacher. They

had made this vow between themselves, that if either should find the truth he would straightway tell his comrade. But a man who says to himself: "I will find the truth," is he not like a man who enters a thick forest and says: "To-day I will find a deer?" Long is the journey and dense the unpathed wilderness, and the deer of truth hides from those who would seize it. Yet there came a day when Sariputta met Asajji, one of the Five who first received the Fruit of Perfect Enlightenment from the Lord's hands. And seeing Asajji he said within himself: "Here is assuredly one whom the passions sweep harmlessly by, as a river sweeps by some island whose loins are made of the solid rock!" In that face there was neither fear nor desire! Only a deep and wondrous calm shone within it—as in the sky of summer shines the quietness of the sun's setting when evening is upon the mountains! So he said: "Sir, I would know who is thy Teacher? And his teaching—canst thou expound it to this ignorant one before thee?"

Then answered Asajji. (And, seeing Sariputta, in his spirit joy arose, as a spring wells up in the mountains when the rains have fed deep the secret channels. For he knew that before him was one who would receive the Word of Sal-

vation.) He answered: "There is a mighty Sage, Sakya Muni, the son of the Sakya clan, who has made his home in the homeless. He is my Master, and his teaching I proclaim.

*"All things have root and cause, this hath he shown.
How each shall find its end, this he makes known."*

Hearing these words Sariputta felt throughout his body the light of knowledge glow, as when a lamp is lit within a house that was in darkness; and he Attained to the Eye of the Doctrine. So he spake in his turn, saying:

*"Following these words of thine, I have found a road
Through the wilderness of sense and sound and
seeing,
As one who has lost his way to truth's abode,
Long in the tangled thickets starting, fleeing,
In dread of those fierce passions that would kill,
I wandered, seeking good but stumbling still.
Now arrow-flight I see my path run straight
To that unpanged unshaken sorrowless state—
True Paradise sought vainly by the Sages,
Birth following birth, ages on blinded ages!"*

Doing obeisance, he went straightway to his friend, as his promise was. And as when a curtain is withdrawn and through the window shines in unimpeded the brightness of the risen

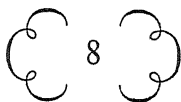
sun, so at sight of his countenance his friend knew, and he said: "Thine eyes are clear, and thy mind shows her delight as she sits at the door of seeing. Thy skin shines with perfect health and radiance. It must surely be that thou hast passed through mortality to the immortal!" And Sariputta told him the Excellent Truth of the Cessation of Sorrow and of Sorrowful Re-birth, which he had learnt from Asajji. So the two of them together sought out the Blessed One, who when he saw them coming uttered this prophecy:

"Two friends are coming: friends from their first of youth:

Now friends of mine! servants and sons of truth!

"Come, Ascetics!"

So saying, the Lord made these two his disciples.



Through the city the Lord walked, and his disciples with him. From the balconies looked the women curiously; and the merchant

paused in his chaffering, and the husbandman in his field work, and the young man in his pleasure or his thought—marvelling as that Sun of the Sakya lineage walked through their midst.

Panchkori said to himself: "This is a great city, and its people are wise and rich and mighty. Those walls which guard it—not Rama King of Ayodhya, with all his archers, could drive its defenders down! How laden are these stalls! How brightly clad these women! How towering and vast the houses where these fortunate ones live!" In his shame and sense of worthlessness he shrank into the company of the Lord's disciples, seeking not to be seen.

Beyond the city they came to the garden and palace which Anathapindika, the prince of merchants, had given to the Lord and his ascetics. Here were terraces and shaded walks, and fruit-trees, and eighty rooms, and places for bathing, and for the Lord himself the Fragrance Chamber, which night and day was full of flowers. But the Lord made his way yet farther, to Veluvan, the Bamboo Grove, and here they prepared to spend the night.

As a boy among men, as a beggar among princes, as one ignorant among the learned, was

Panchkori among the brethren. He stood silently watching, and did what work was laid upon him.

He looked at these monks, men who had made their homes in the homeless, as a child looks on mighty warriors, and wonders: "Shall I myself, that am so weak and helpless, ever win a place among such?" There, listening to the Blessed One's words, were Kassapa the keen-eyed and stern; Purna the fearless; Moggallana, the Discerner of Spirits, whose own spirit went abroad from his body and conversed with those who had died. There were also Nagasamala the obstinate; Sariputta, and Revata, Sariputta's brother; Anuruddha the gracious. There was also Devadatta, the Lord's cousin (as was Ananda).

That evening the Lord called his new ascetics forward, and said to Sariputta: "Dhammasenapati!"—"General of the Doctrine", for this was his name for Sariputta—"Dhammasenapati, I have two new disciples. To-morrow begin to instruct them in the Law." It was Sariputta's task to instruct those who were new to the Excellent Doctrine. He was the Chief of Those who Gave Instruction.

Moggallana the silent led Panchkori to a

bed of leaves in shadow of a banyan, and pointed to it. The night was the last of the Dark Fortnight, and within the skies was no point of light or even glimmer of greyness. The herd-boy was frightened.

Moggallana asked grimly: "What dost thou fear, Ascetic?"

"Evil spirits and ghosts of the darkness."

"What is thy name?"

"Five Cowries."

"Then it seems to me thou hast small cause for fear! When evil spirits come they come for some greater matter than five cowries!"

Yet, softening as knowledge of the boy's terror and his youth came to him through the night, Moggallana said:

*"Spirits and Ghosts of Evil, Shapes that lie
Batlike in boughs, to clutch the passer-by!
Spectres of women dead in fruitless pain—
Who haunt in trees that edge the trodden road—
To thee, Ascetic, these are dreams and vain!
Hast thou forgot the Truth thy Teacher showed?"*

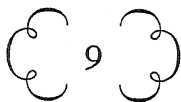
These were noble words, but as yet small comfort to the herd-boy left alone in shadow of a haunted tree. He lay there wretched and frightened, and could not sleep, for all the tired-

ness which the day had brought. It was while he lay there with restless eyes that turned first towards this crackling leaf and then towards that dry twig falling from its branch, that he was aware of a tall shape standing beside him, and his blood froze. It was the Spirit of the Tree, who had come to claim the mortal that had dared to make a bed in its shadow!

The Lord knew what thoughts were passing through the boy's brain, and his voice came through the darkness, calming fear. "What is there in the Three Worlds that can harm the man who has found a refuge?"

He walked these groves by night, meditating in the hours when all noises were stilled. For when did he sleep—the Blessed One who was awake until time should end?

And all things that by night were stirring, knowing his footsteps, were at peace.



Kassapa, whom they called the Prince, in manner and speech commanding, was in life the most austere and humble of all the breth-

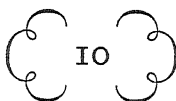
ren. He begged by choice from lepers and others with foul diseases—by all means striving to kill the root of pride within him. He would have taken the two new disciples with him. But the Lord told him: “They are not ready for thee—yet.”

Devadatta, the Lord’s cousin, said: “If a robber and a herd-boy join the Order, without doubt it will overspread the world!” This he said with outward gracious seeming, yet so as to leave the mind ill at ease. Mara the Evil One attended him, watching for a time when he might enter into possession.

It was the Lord’s other kinsman, Ananda, who took Panchkori with him as he went begging through the city. Ananda was kind and gentle—“Well wast thou named Ananda, *Joy*,” said the Blessed One, “for in thy spirit Joy has made her home, as a snake makes its home in the crack of a wall!”

As for Eklochon, the Lord sent him to journey through every village where men and women had been wronged by him. “He must assuredly seek out his own evil deeds,” said the Blessed One, “and must find them before they find him. It is by this finding of them that instruction will come to him, and even

better than by thy teaching, Dhammasenapati.”
“That may well be,” Sariputta assented.

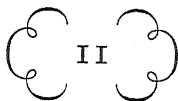


It was the time of noonday meditation, and the saffron-robed monks were seated, each in his circle of silence. Suddenly the Blessed One spoke.

“Torpor is one thing, Moggallana. And the Silence of Aryans in Meditation is quite another.”

Moggallana started out of his doze. “The mid-day heat made me sink as into a swoon, Lord.”

Panchkori saw that the Lord’s eyes were smiling. “The midday heat made Moggallana sink as into a swoon, Panchkori,” he said.



It drew near the Season of the Rains. Black clouds began to gather on the mountains. Evening by evening the lightnings danced to the

piping of invisible flute-players. Ananda grew excited, and day after day he asked the Tathāgata: "Is it not time that we withdrew to the Vulture's Peak?"

"In four days, or perhaps three, it will be time, Ananda."

Again Ananda asked.

"In three days, or perhaps two, it will be time, Ananda."

Then one morning the Blessed One, after meditation gazing long at the west, said: "To-day it is time, Ananda. For to-morrow the Rains will break."

How great was then the joy of those Ascetics! For they were leaving the tumult and dust of the city, and the hours of begging under the hot sun, for the cool shelter of the high hills, and the huts built in shadow of its rocks! Here they would listen to the drums of the thunder and the hour-after-hour pouring of the rain. Now indeed was Ananda the Son of Ecstasy!

As they left the city the Blessed One was silent. Presently, to Ananda he spoke, as they began to mount the rocky path.

"Didst thou notice a man working in the streets of the city, as we went out of it, Ananda?"

"I saw him, Lord. He was a sweeper, an out-cast. His work was to gather together withered garlands to burn. All men despise such. Even to come within their shadow means defilement—for those who have not learnt the Excellent Law."

"Even such a man I seem to myself, Ananda. My work is to gather up withered flowers, which others despise. But didst thou not notice him more nearly, Disciple?"

"What was there to notice, Lord? He was but a man who swept together withered flowers and rubbish. He shrank away, as was right, when he saw thee draw near."

"Thou dost not notice much, my Ananda! I must ask Moggallana to give thee lessons in wakefulness! To me the man seemed one who was ready to accept the Excellent Law."

"That can never be," said Ananda. "A sweeper is one whose soul is brutish and without understanding." The others said this also. "A sweeper is one whose soul is without understanding."

Then, as the road mounted, and the plain below subsided under its cloud of dust and haze, and the hill tracks stood out clearly, Ananda, lifting his eyes, sang the Hymn of the Glades of Exultation:

*“These are the glades wherein my soul exults,
The glades of joy! the glades to which we mount—
High in the hills—silver with flashing fount
Of forest brooks that draw their bubbling stream
Down the wet rocks, and thence with hidden
gleam
Run through a path of flowers! Here the red
krin
Hangs out its blood-gold trumpets!*

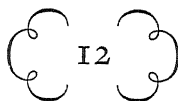
*These are the glades wherein my soul exults,
Where through the wilderness rings the glad shout
Of elephants at sport—who mock and flout
The thunder of the Gods above them hurled!
Where ink-blue clouds, by the winds fiercely
whirled,
Are like a tattered flag held high aloft!
They are the herds of Indra!*

*These are the glades wherein my soul exults,
The battlements of mist! on the iron rock
Built up like walls to bear the battle's shock!
Pinnacled into black and azure towers!
The water-weeping crags! the wind-swayed
flowers!
The shy, deep lakes shut in with emerald groves,
The crystal-bright soft waters!*

*These are the glades wherein my soul exults,
 Glades sunk in trees! the Wind-God's muffled
 ways!
 God's silent tongues! whose silence is His praise!
 Where feed the timid deer! and peacock flies!
 The crested bird with tail all set with eyes!
 Where black-faced monkeys under the tall steep
 Haunt the clear silent mirrors!*

*These are the glades wherein my soul exults,
 It is not pipe of flute or throb of drum
 Or lute's sweet call—No! But the mad swift
 strum
 Of the musician storms in cliff and tree—
 Those are the strains that wake delight in me!
 When with mind poised and calm, and will at rest,
 I hear the Law and learn it!"*

So, as they went up the mountain, the Ascetics all sang, as the mind within them and their varying gift of poetry moved them. "These are the glades wherein my soul exults!"



Half of the ascetics remained with the Lord, Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine. The other half he sent to lonely medita-

tion, till a month was passed. Then they returned, and the others took their places.

For those who were going, then, they sang at parting the Psalm of Loneliness, of the Ascetic alone in the Month of Solitary Meditation. First Ananda sang; then all the monks in answering chorus.

*“Free from deceit and longing, from desire,
Hate, folly, envy, anger’s gnawing fire——*

Like the rhinoceros alone he wanders!

*Father and mother, wife and children left—
Of corn and fields and house and wealth bereft——*

Like the rhinoceros alone he wanders!

*As through the wood a beast unbound goes feeding,
So let the wise, his own clear purpose heeding!*

Like the rhinoceros alone he wanders!

*With downcast gaze, and nothing, nothing eyeing,
The senses knit and calm, the mind unprying——*

Like the rhinoceros alone he wanders!

*Bent to stamp out desire—watchful!—no fool!
Wise, vigorous, earnest, eager, keen yet cool!*

Like the rhinoceros alone he wanders!

*Lion unfearing noises, wind unsnared,
Lotus unstained—the monk with mind pre-
pared——*

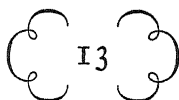
Like the rhinoceros alone he wanders!

*Walk with another, you will walk at strife!
Fall out and curse and scold—with friend or wife!*

Like the rhinoceros alone then wander!

*Through plain and slope, dry ground and
marsh o'ergrown,
Like the rhinoceros—alone—alone!"*

In the cool of the evening they reached the huts amid the forest. And Moggallana said, scanning the west, "It is well. For to-morrow the Rains will break, and the wilderness will be like a demon weeping in madness. It will be no time to be abroad! The Blessed One has chosen his hour exactly!"



But that night—in the first watch of the night—the Lord, in the greatness of his pity, with the Eye of Pity surveying All Things,

and perceiving how birth and death were pain and sorrow, and how men and women toiled for that which brought not salvation and endured what it is grief even to consider, even though we ourselves may have found the Excellent Refuge, let his thoughts travel widely. And as a hawk desirous of a mate, that flies over mountains and looks far and deep into the secret valleys, so he thought of all living beings, with the torch of compassion peering into their hearts. And in the heart of Sunita, the city drudge, he marked the conditions of discipleship, shining like a lamp within a jar.

And as the night began to grow grey with the coming of dawn, at the sound of the winging of the wild things of the darkness home he robed himself and took his bowl and stood beside the bed of the herd-boy and wakened him. And Panchkori rose and followed the Lord, nothing questioning. And in the beginning brightness they strode swiftly down the Vulture's Peak, to the city and its dust again.

Then the Lord made his way to where Sunita the sweeper was cleansing the streets. Now Sunita was sweeping together brittle sticks and withered garlands, and bearing away his rubbish in baskets yoked across his shoulders. When he

saw the Lord draw near his heart stood still with astonishment and awe and the wildness of desire and love. He would have sunk out of sight, but there was no way of escape. So he placed his yoke in a corner of the wall, and stood with back as if stuck to the wall, with palms together in adoration.

The Blessed One drew near, and in a voice full of all sweetness and pity asked: "Sunita, what to you is this poor way of livelihood?"

And Sunita, trembling, answered: "It is the way which fate has laid upon me, as a burden is laid upon ox or ass. It is torment and loathing, yet it must be endured."

"Is it in your heart to leave it and to leave the world? Have you the strength of mind to become my Ascetic?"

And Sunita, his heart struck with rapture as by arrows of unbearable pain, replied: "If such as I may become your disciple, Lord, why should I hesitate? Will the Blessed One permit such an one as I am to leave the world?"

"Come!" answered the Lord; and they all three took the mountain path together, back to the Vulture's Peak.

It was late afternoon when they reached the brethren's huts again, and the Blessed One was

wearied. Seeing him, the monks were indignant, and said: "To what purpose was the Blessed One permitted to endure the journey down to the dust and heat of the city, and the toilsome climb up the mountains?" And Moggallana said: "It was to bring this sweeper to be a disciple." And all the others said: "It was not right that the Lord should endure such labour for the sake of one so lowly." And Sunita, seeking to shrink aside, said to himself: "They speak truth. It was not right that the Lord should have endured such labour for the sake of one so lowly."

But the Lord, seeing his fear and humiliation, said to Panchkori: "Recall my monk, Panchkori, and bid him come before us."

So Panchkori brought him back, and Sunita stood before the brethren, with folded hands of obeisance and shame.

Then said the Blessed One: "Have no fear, Disciple. Speak out freely all that is in thy heart, and let these hear."

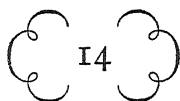
So Sunita's tongue was unloosed, and his heart leapt out of its sorrow, as a stream that leaps forth out of its hardness of rock, to be a nurse and mother of flowers. And he said:

*"I was a sweeper of garlands men flung in the dust.
While the gay ones slumbered I gathered and bore
apart
All they had tossed aside. Scorn was my lot.*

*"Had the Blessed One held me base, the deed were
just!
I saw him come, and awe was in all my heart!
Then joy sprang up, and fear and despair were
not!*

"I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Law. I take refuge in the Assembly."

"Let no monk despise this disciple," said the Lord.



As the sun went towards its setting its brightness gathered together in a redness as of conflagration; and immediately after came the mutterings of thunder. Then a tempest swept up, and on the plains below the brethren saw the clouds of dust flying before it, as demons when the Gods have won the victory. The city and the King's palace were hidden, as a pyre is hid-

den by smoke, when rain has fallen, smothering the flames yet not quenching its secret heart within.

Came the crashing of the thunder above them, and the crags of the Vulture's Peak were licked with tongues of lightning. Rain sluiced from the blackness of congregated vapours overhead. And the Lord, seated in the mouth of a mighty cave, with the ascetics about him, began to teach; he spoke the Sermon of the Terror of Storm.

"The world, O Ascetics, is in storm. The heart of man is in storm, and the palaces of kings are in storm. All things come in tempest and in tempest they pass away. If the rich man says: 'I have wealth and servants to guard it, and I can sit at my ease and enjoy the lusts of the body!' yet within him, though he knows it not, disease and weakness and old age lie in wait, as a tigress for the deer that will pass when night falls on the mountain pathway. If the young man says: 'I have strength and the power to feed desire,' for him too, though its coming be delayed a few years, storm and destruction are sure. And as a house which the Rains have shattered lies disordered, its roof-tree decayed and its thatch mouldering, so his limbs will lie on the burning

pile, their vigour vanished, their beauty sprawling and lost. And last of all, high above this useless body will the flames leap and exult, and in storm shall his body pass away, as in storm and anguish of his mother's body it came first into this life. Everything, O Ascetics, is in storm. Within the mind are fears and despairs and excitements of joy and of sorrow—tossing it hither and thither, as the dry leaves of the forest are tossed by the tempest, as the dust of the roads is swept by the wind that runs before the coming of the Rains. From the mind come anger and words of hatred, leaping out as the lightning leaps out from the inky blackness of the cloud-forest in the heavens. Everything, Ascetics, is in storm.”

The Lord preached also the Discourse of Useless Effort.

“Seven years, Ascetics, Mara the Evil One followed close behind me, as a shadow follows close behind the body. Seeking and pressing for an entrance, and finding none, at the last he went from me gloomy and dejected.

“To me intent on meditation, as I sat beside the Phalgu River, by all means resolved to en-throne within this House of Nine Doors the Mind at Rest, came Mara the Evil One; and

his looks were those of pity and kindness, and his speech was laden with compassion, as a breeze in summer is laden with the honeyed sweetness of flowers.

“ ‘Withered and shrunken art thou,’ said Mara the Evil One. ‘Death draweth nigh thee. Indeed thou art already his; he hath in thee a thousand parts, and life has but one. But life is better. Live, therefore.

“ ‘Become a prince again, and hereafter king. It may be that to thy lot it will fall to perform the horse-sacrifice and be king of all realms and peoples. Living thus, power shall be in thy hands; and thou shalt do good works.

“ ‘Thou wast born a prince. This was the fruit of thy deeds in former lives! And who shall escape the fruit of those deeds? A prince wast thou made, and a prince’s life is ordained for thee. What hast thou to do with effort?

“ ‘*Hard is this path of effort—to strive and strain!
Hard to perform is this! hard to attain!*’ ”

“These words did Mara the Evil One speak, standing before me, in the shadow of a mighty tree above the waters of Phalgu, that run softly.

“Then made I answer to Mara the Evil One: ‘Comrade of the slothful, friend of those who

desire ease and the body's comfort! Not for *my* sake! but for thine own hast thou accosted me! The water even of rivers must dry up in this fierce wind of summer's solstice. Phalgu has hid his stream under sand. The doves faint in the mango coverts. Heat has driven the wild things of the forest to madness. How then should not my blood shrink, as this river has shrunk? How should my limbs not shrivel? When these seven years I have sat in meditation!

"But while the blood dries, and the limbs shrink into weakness and frailty, the mind within grows calm. My Dweller in the Innermost has bolted doors, against which neither heat nor foe can prevail. My mind looks no longer towards the lusts of the eye and the flesh.

"These lusts are thy companions, the hosts over which thou hast dominion. Lusts are thy first army; and behind them march hatred and appetite and desire and indolence and shrinking. Doubt and dullness of thought, hypocrisy, false glory, the longing for praise of men, the extolling of one's self and the despising of others—these, O Mara, are the armies of thee the Dark Spirit!

"In this battle which against thee I wage some who are brahmins and ascetics have not ven-

tured themselves. They know not the Way of Virtue! But it has been shown to this Watcher by the Phalgu!

*"I am wearing munja-grass. Who sees it sees
Strife to the death is what the Mind decrees!*

*His choice—amid the wreck of worlds un-
shaken!—*

The Dweller in the Innermost has taken!

*As a strong post beset with robber bands,
This House of Nine Doors safe, though threatened,
stands!*

*The Dweller in the Innermost has heard
The trumpets' clang, the foeman's braggart word!*

*He has looked forth, clear-eyed and undismayed,
On Mara's armies, and their Chief arrayed*

*With elephant for battle! Host on host
They swarm, yet shall not drive me from my post!*

*That army of thine, though vainly gods assail,
Though from its shock the world of mortals quail—*

*I have a shattering word shall strike it prone!
Like an unbaked earthen pot, struck with a stone!"*

"Hearing my defiance, Mara the Evil One

said: 'For seven years I have watched thee step by step. As a crow that has gone after a white rock that appeared at distance like a lump of fat, as that crow when he learns that it is a stone, hard and without juice or sweetness, so in dejection and grief I go from thee.'

"Seven years, Ascetics, Mara the Evil One followed me. Seven years, as the night came upon me in my forest loneliness I would be aware of a black shape that clung to me, and would feel in the darkness the breath of hate and cunning. I would wake from sleep or rise from meditation, and behold there was one that watched me, himself unseen!

"But now, learning that my resolution was fixed and could not be shaken, the lute of that Wicked One—whereon he had meant to play me beguiling music, as I sat there weak and emaciated, in the heat whereby all things swooned and Phalgu gathered his slender trickle deep into his sand—that lute slipped from beneath the arm of Mara the Evil One, who was overcome with grief and despair. And I heard a sighing as of the harsh wind that rustles up from the first step of the coming tempest; and knew that he had gone from me!"

How sweet and gracious was this time of the Rains! as they sat in their grass-thatched huts, and listened! as the Lord expounded to them the Excellent Law!

In the pauses of the showers the monks went abroad, and the fragrance of the satisfied earth came up to them like an incense!

In the blackness of the night the croaking of the frogs, sunk in contentment, was their music!

And from the trees rang the songs of the golden orioles, like the ringing of a bell in paradise to call the righteous to worship! and on the long-leaf-tapering boughs of the *jām*-trees the rich black plums ripened and grew full of juice!

Suddenly one evening came a monk whose saffron robes were torn and dirty, and his face gashed from a recent sword-cut. Seeing him, the brethren cried out that he brought disgrace upon them, and that his robe should be taken off him and he himself sent back to the world.

"Let him alone," said the Blessed One. "It is Eklochon. And he has met with some of those whom he is seeking."

"Whom is he seeking, Lord?" asked Sariputta.

"His own evil deeds," answered the Lord. "Hast thou forgotten what I told thee when I sent him forth?"

And as the monk came up they saw it was even as the Lord had said. It was Eklochon; and his step was lame and weary, and his body fainting from want of food. But in his eyes shone the Torch of Conquest. He came up, and took the dust of the Lord's feet.

"Hast thou had propitious journeying?" asked the Lord.

"I have had propitious journeying," answered the monk. "In every place to which I went, happiness went with me."

"Tell us of thy goings."

"I went to Chandagram, a village where once I and my band slew men and women, and burnt their houses; and here I began to Turn the Wheel of the Truth. But a man recognized me, and he cried out in great dread: 'It is Eklochon, the fierce and pitiless robber!' So all the people fled within their houses. Then I walked up and down their streets crying: 'It is true. I am Eklochon, the fierce and pitiless robber. But I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Law. I take refuge in the Assembly.' Then a woman cried from a housetop: 'Take refuge in that!' and

broke my head with a stone. So they drove me forth. And wherever I went this rumour preceded me, of my former evil deeds. And in one place I lay bound three days and nights in the sun and rain, with the torment of creeping things over me; and in another they broke my bowl; and in yet another a man cut my face with his sword, so that my eyes were blinded with my own blood. But always I bore witness, 'I take refuge in the Buddha: I take refuge in the Law: I take refuge in the Assembly.' "

Then the Lord kissed his cheek, and said: "It is well, Disciple. Thine evil deeds, which have followed thee like a pack of hounds desiring blood, begin to grow discouraged. For they know that thou fleest no longer, but art *seeking them*; and confronting thy spirit they find thee unafraid. Let no man", he added, turning round on the brethren, "despise this disciple."

So they washed his wounds, and gave him food and drink.

That same evening, following this ascetic came a clatter of hooves up the forest paths, and a troop surrounded the brethren, as they sat with the Lord.

"Let no monk stir," commanded the Tathāgata. "This is but a dust-cloud, and it will pass."

It was King Bimbisara, and dismounting he cried out: "It is said, good sir, that Eklochon the fierce and pitiless robber is among thy monks. Can a tigress change her nature? Or may that wicked one continue among the living, and my people be safe?"

"See for thyself," answered the Blessed One, and pointed to the robber, seated there.

Then King and Ascetic came face to face, and before the clear glad eyes of the Ascetic the King's face became full of shame, and he bowed low. "Tell me of aught that thou desirest, and I will give it thee. Is it robes? For I see that thy robe has been torn."

"I have enough, King Bimbisara," answered the Ascetic. "I have my Three Robes: the Lord who is before me, the Doctrine, and this Assembly of my brothers."

So the King led back his soldiers, and the Blessed One continued his discourse. And at the end of it, as custom was, he asked if any of the brethren had aught he would say. And his eyes rested on Eklochon.

"Was there aught that was a trouble to thee in thy journeyings, Eklochon?"

"There was this thing, Lord. In a wayside hut I came upon a woman in pangs of childbirth,

crying out for pain. And there was no word that I could say that would help her."

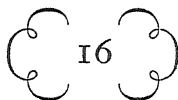
"There was this word, Eklochon. Thou couldest have done an Act of Truth, saying to her: 'Sister, since from my day of birth I have never wittingly taken its life from any living being, by this truth may thou and thine unborn child obtain health and peace!'"

"And would that have brought the woman strength?"

"Assuredly."

"But how could such an one as I am have spoken those words? They would not have been—with me—an Act of Truth."

"Say then to such in future: 'Sister, *since I was born again* of the Noble Fourfold Doctrine, never have I wittingly taken its life from any living being. By that truth, sister, may thou and thine unborn child find health and peace!'"



Of Sariputta and Moggallana the Lord said often: "Sariputta is the midwife who brings my monks to birth, Moggallana is the

schoolmaster who disciplines them.” Yet against them some of the brethren complained, saying: “It was not until they had been with the Tathāgata for seven days that they attained Fullness of Liberation. Why then should they be accounted kings among ascetics? Sariputta is his General of the Excellent Doctrine, and Moggallana is the Discerner of Spirits. Yet it was a full week before they attained Fullness of Liberation!”

The Lord knew their thoughts, and said: “Know, in a former life these two vowed that they would one day serve the Buddha. That vow has come to fulfilment. It is when desire begins in the heart that the deed begins. So they were my disciples in days long forgotten! Is there any harm then in such being now your leaders?”

The monks assented, saying: “Since it is when desire begins in the heart that the deed begins, these two are certainly old disciples.”

Concerning Ananda also many of the brethren said: “He loves the Blessed One as the children of the unenlightened love their parents or their wives. He follows the Blessed One with his looks, as a shadow follows the body! Even in the hero-seat of meditation his thought is not upon the Doctrine but upon the Lord! For this

cause is it that Ananda, though he has Turned the Wheel of the Law for so many years, is not yet an *arahat*—as are Sariputta and even Moggallana—and many others among us!”

This thought at whiles seemed to visit the Lord himself.

“Let none of you love anything or any person,” he said. “To lose the beloved is sorrow, and that sorrow must surely come! He that loves nothing and hates nothing, that man, Ananda, is without fetters!”

Yet, seeing Ananda’s face troubled, he added, smiling: “Thy gladness of heart, O Ananda, will not bar thee from paradise. And if thy gladness of heart springs from the presence of me and thy brethren, yet will not Mara the Evil One be able to give thee a fall because of that. I have a thought that this gladness of thine will follow thee through all worlds, and be part of thy reward hereafter. Let no man”, said the Tathāgata, “despise this disciple.”

Panchkori learnt from Sariputta to Turn the Wheel of the Law. And bit by bit he found that under Moggallana’s grimness was a smile in his secret thought. When the House of Nine Doors was shut and forbidding to the wayfarer who would have entered, the Dweller in the

Innermost was smiling! And a call perchance would summon him to the doors, and he would open and bid you enter and be refreshed!



The Rains finished, and the Lord said: "It is time that we went abroad again, to Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine." But first, as his custom was, he spoke the Discourse of the Four-fold Truth.

The Noble Truth of Pain. Birth is pain, old age and weakness are pain, sickness is pain, death is pain; grief and despair and dejection, these are pain. Things unpleasant cause pain, and to fail of what we desire is pain. All life is therefore pain.

And second, the Noble Truth of the Cause of Pain. Craving and desire, which lead us from birth to birth, as a prisoner bound in chains of iron, through the ages endlessly! These are the Cause of Pain. Pleasure and lust—the finding of pleasure here—as a bee finds honey in this or that flower!—the clutching after existence, the springing forth of soul and body to the fulfilment of

passion—these things are the Cause of Pain.

And third, this is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Pain. Let craving perish! let desire wither as a flower in the heat when no water is applied to its root! cease to feed it with the water of indulgence! take to it the trowel of resolution, and dig it out by the roots! Let desire go, without any clinging earth to its roots, without remainder of attachment. Let the Dweller in the Innermost say: Desire in me is dead, and within this House of Nine Doors it shall set foot no more! This is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Pain.

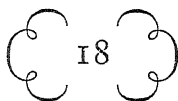
And fourth, this is the Noble Truth of the Path that brings to the Cessation of Pain. It is the Noble Eightfold Path: Right Opinions, Right Intentions, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right State of Mind, Right Ecstasy. These, as by a straight path through forest, will bring us through the wilderness of the world to the Cessation of Pain.

Then said all the monks: "This Noble Truth of Pain must be clearly grasped!"

The Lord therefore repeated his exposition; and he said: "When I was by the Phalgu, O Ascetics, through those long seven years when Mara the Evil One was my shadow, I felt in

my body anguish, and after anguish numbness. And I said to myself: 'Surely no ascetics or brahmins have endured such torment of body, and such weakness of bone and vanished flesh, as I endure now! Yet is not pain extinguished within my mind, but smoulders still, like a heart of fire that is hid in reeds.' Then I said: 'I will find my way to the Truth that brings Cessation of Pain.' As a warrior who has put on *munja*-grass and eyes the host of the foemen, saying: 'I will not return from this struggle till I have won through to victory,' so did I say within myself: 'I will surely find my way to the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Pain!' "

But not yet did the Lord reveal the story of the Night of Enlightenment.



At a spur of the hills, where they saw the plain outspread before them, as a carpet in a great king's hall, to which stairs lead down, the Blessed One said: "As one who on a high mountain looks down upon those who walk the level fields below, even thus does one who sees

with the Eye of Enlightenment look down upon the worlds. He sees its people, how their eyes are solely upon their labour. Yet night and day stands the Mountain of the Excellent Law, for their comfort and healing.”

Ananda, regretful for the Vulture’s Peak which they were leaving, looked back and sighed. “These are the glades wherein my soul exults,” he murmured.

The Lord hearing him said: “Say not so, Ananda. That time of rest and meditation is finished. Say rather: ‘I descend at due season, to Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine in men’s sight.’ Say rather:

“*These are the glades wherein my soul exults:
The city’s streets where labourers sweat and
drudge,
Where age and anguish faint, and dully trudge
Oxen, with patient tread and winking eyes,
Through mist of their own dust and crowding
flies;
Leper and palm-leg¹ stalk, and wild despair
Is angry at the sunlight!*”

“I will try to say it,” answered Ananda. “But it is *not* at thought of such glades as these that my soul exults!”

¹ Elephantiasis.

Journeying over the softened roads and between the terraced rice-fields, they saw a farmer, kneading the mud with his toes and casting in the seed. Before him halted the Blessed One, with bowl held out for alms.

But the farmer shook his head and added words of reproach. "I plough my land and then throw in the seed. And watching it through many months, and seated above it by night when the fruit ripens and the wild things of the forest and the air desire it, last of all I eat. Do you, Ascetic, lay aside your way of life, which is idleness. Plough! sow! and *then* eat!"

"And so I do," said the Tathāgata. "I am a farmer also."

"Strange farming is this! To wander through the fields of others and beg of their store! I do not see Gotama's yoke or bullocks or plough-share or goad."

"Faith is the seed I sow," answered the Tathāgata. "I water it with the rain of austerity. I plough men's hearts with the furrow of the Doctrine. Effort is my oxen; and my will, set

firmly on the end from the beginning, is the goad I use. The fruit that springs from fields furrowed so is Immortality. Having used this husbandry one is freed from rebirth."

But the brahmin (for the farmer was a brahmin) shook his head. They went on therefore.

"Such an one", said Moggallana, "has not learnt to control his will by asceticism. Hence his mind is all set on gain, and he despises the Doctrine."

"No asceticism", said the Blessed One, "can purify the man who has not overcome desire. He looks forth upon the world—and upon his own rich fields—and he says: 'I am the master, and all this is mine!' He does not see Age and Death waiting for their hour—Age and Death who are busy everywhere, like cowherds with sharp-pointed staves driving cows into their stalls."

"And last of all," said Dhammasenapati, "he will perish—like an aged heron in a pond where no fish remain."

Panchkori had looked round; and he said: "The farmer is calling us back. See, he is shouting and waving his arms."

"Let him shout his fill," said Moggallana. "Is

the Tathāgata¹ to return at the bidding of a churl?"

"The Tathāgata would return at the bidding of a leper or a dog," said the Lord, smiling; and they went back.

The man fell at the Lord's feet, crying: "I have sinned, and even as I went forward from sin punishment sprang upon me, as the king's guards spring upon a thief whom they have seen. As I went through my mud, kneading it with my toes, a serpent stung me, and I must die!"

He lifted his foot in anguish; and they saw a snake gliding about still in the wetness of the field.

"Panchkori," said the Lord, "were any of thy fellows ever stung by serpents, as they herded cows in the forest?"

"It would happen sometimes."

"And what ensued?"

"They died. Or if God were merciful they might live."

"If the Blessed One will show mercy on me," cried the farmer, "I shall live!"

"That serpent", Moggallana assured him, "was

¹ "He that has attained thither" (i.e. to complete enlightenment).

but thy thread of fate, and came to accomplish the fruit of thine evil deeds in a former birth."

"Let the Doctrine sleep at this hour, Moggallana," said the Lord. "Tell me, Panchkori, when God was merciful and the stricken man lived, was he merciful without all help of thy fellows?"

"By no means, Lord. We did what was in our knowledge and power to do."

"Do it now then, to this unhappy one."

Thus bidden, Panchkori from his girdle drew his hunter's knife, which he still kept, and slashed the wound, so that the blood flowed freely. He applied to it also a light porous stone, which he carried at his belt. The farmer cried out piteously the while.

After a time Panchkori seemed contented, and making a ball of mud he tied it with a piece of the farmer's cloth to his foot.

The Blessed One had watched all this closely, and now asked: "Will he live?"

"He will live."

Then the brahmin put his palms together, and entreated: "Let me follow the Blessed One and learn of the Doctrine."

But the Blessed One, scanning his face, replied: "No. For it is in my mind that thou art not yet ready for the ascetic's life. And if all

who are good farmers leave their fields which are good, then"—he smiled—"for farmers such as myself and these there will be no fruit in season."

"Then may such an one as I am follow the Excellent Law and yet abide in my village?"

"Not only thou, but many such as thou art, must abide in their villages, following the Noble Eightfold Path—that this Doctrine may save mankind."

So the Lord told him of the Four Noble Truths, and showed him the way that leads to the Extinction of Desire. "Nevertheless," he said, "I think that as yet thou hast small wish for the Extinction of Desire."

"I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Law. I take refuge in the Assembly," persisted the brahmin.

"Yes! When a serpent clings to thy foot!" said Moggallana. "Has the Blessed One serpents everywhere—to convince such as thou of the Doctrine?"

"Abide in thy village," said the Lord gently, "and meditate on what thou hast heard. And when thy work here rests for a season, come where I am, and thou shalt have instruction further."

“And will not the root of salvation wither within me, if I hear not, and see not, the Tathāgata daily?”

“That is for thee to decide. As a bee collects honey, not hurting the flower, nor robbing it of fragrance or brightness, so let my ascetic abide in his village.”

The man wavered, half desiring to follow the Blessed One, half desiring to cling to his fields and wealth. “But how will the Blessed One know that I strive to Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine, if I live not with him?”

“I shall know. The fragrance of a flower travels not against the wind. But the fragrance of a good man’s life travels against all winds, and pervades all directions. Remember, then, this hour of anguish and fear, when the Messenger of Death stood at thy door and it was shown to thee that thou hadst no provision for that journey! Come, Ascetics!”

So the Blessed One went on his way.

When they had gone a little distance, he halted, and they rested. Then he said: “Panchkori, it is in my mind to ask thee a question. How didst thou know that the man would live?”

“Because the serpent that bit him had no poison.”

"No poison! How didst thou know?"

"I saw the serpent, Lord. It was still there in the mud, stirring in my sight. But because of his great fear the brahmin did not look to make sure."

"Thou knewest that his bite was not mortal! Yet cut him to the quick, while he cried out in pain!"

"Among my people", said Panchkori, half abashed, "we have a saying that three sounds are above all sweet, though God lets men hear them but rarely: the cry of a brahmin in fear and pain, the voice of the first-born son, and the welcome into paradise when life has ended."

"Beyond doubt, among thy people are many such sayings! But what I am remembering is that my disciple has hurt a living thing, so that he suffered exceedingly and cried out in anguish! and *that* sound he calls sweet!"

"Also", said Sariputta, "he has practised deception."

"The man reviled the Blessed One," said Panchkori stubbornly, "therefore I set pain to be his teacher, and I saw to it that the teacher's words were sharp and pointed."

"Beyond doubt", said Sariputta, "the boy has done great evil."

"But he may have saved a brahmin's soul," said Moggallana grimly. "I myself, being born a brahmin, know that this is no small deed."

"Also", said Ananda, "he has punished a churl who scorned the Blessed One."

"And that too", said Moggallana, "was a good deed—to *my* thinking. Let no man", he added smiling, "despise this disciple."

Watching the Lord's face as they went forward again, Panchkori was troubled. He could not decide whether he were grieved with him or not.

At the evening halt, however, he learnt—somewhat. For the Lord said: "This day I have found two of my disciples who are not yet fit for the Excellent Doctrine. There was that brahmin. And—Panchkori here." He looked at Panchkori, who was about to kindle a fire to cook their evening meal. "Panchkori, how wilt thou make a fire here where no fire is?"

Panchkori looked up surprised.

"Why, by rubbing two flints together, Lord."

"Even so do I think to kindle two fires where now I have two flints only. Thou shalt return to that brahmin whom we saw, and for a whole month be his servant—tending his cattle and doing whatever he bids. And thy wages shall

be that knowledge of the Excellent Doctrine shall come to thee, out in the fields during the long watches."

Sariputta and Ananda both protested.

"Consider," pleaded Ananda, "he is but a boy. And that brahmin's face, if I can judge of men, showed a heart like steel for hardness."

"The boy's fault, though beyond doubt grievous," urged Sariputta, "can be purged by teaching of the Doctrine daily. I blame myself in that I have neglected his instruction."

Moggallana looked grim beyond his wont. "Is he to tell his master of the deception by which the brahmin endured such pain this morning?"

"That is for the disciple himself to decide."

Panchkori was thoughtful and remained silent.

"Hast thou nothing to say, Ascetic?" asked the Lord.

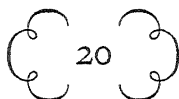
"Nothing, Lord," said the Ascetic.

"Nothing at all?"

"Nothing. Except, it may be, this. The Lord called to himself two disciples, on that night of great terror in the blackness of the robbers' cave. One of them, Eklochon, he has sent out on a quest, to seek his own evil deeds—that are now seeking him! The Lord has shown me pity, in

that I too have an evil deed which I must find. He sends me to seek it while that deed is yet young and without strength. If the Lord had acted otherwise, then that deed would have come upon me unawares, at a time when its strength was grown and I myself at ease concerning it."

As night began to fall Panchkori made his way to the farmer.



It was deep darkness when at last he found the village, and, after inquiry, the brahmin's house. It was a long while before the door was opened to his knocking and calling. The inmates were barred and bolted against robbers and beggars; the farmer was a rich man.

When a servant saw who it was he roughly bade the boy be gone. "The brahmin is sick. Shall he come forth to give alms to a brat whose birth and deeds are vile?" The door was closed.

Panchkori persisted until at length the door was flung open again, and two menservants came out and struck him with staves. "Now wilt thou go?"

"Tell the brahmin that the Blessed One who healed him has sent me."

The brahmin came, half in fear and half in question. "Has the Blessed One sent thee back to obtain a gift—for him and for thyself? I am poor. My fields—as thou sawest——"

"I saw," said Panchkori. "Neither the Blessed One nor I desire any gift."

"The Blessed One has not drawn back his blessing?" the farmer cried out.

"No. His gifts go from him without retraction or return. As the sun's brightness, that goes out to the world's ends and where no living creature is, no less than to rich fields such as thine, O brahmin!"

"Say then to the Blessed One: Later—when this work of sowing and tending and harvest is finished—Devendranath the brahmin will come to learn at his feet."

"Says the Lord: Will that harvest wait? The harvest of the spirit, of which he is the farmer? The earthly seasons halt not, but hasten all seeds to perfection, and after perfection to their dying. He has therefore sent me to be thy teacher, and for one month I am to instruct thee in the Excellent Law."

"He has sent *thee*—a beggar's brat—a thing

of base ignoble birth—to be teacher to a brahmin whose piety and good works in former lives have made him noble and wealthy in this one!”

“Even so. Didst thou not this morning, when the fear and pain of dying were upon thee, take refuge in the Buddha, the Law, and the Assembly?”

The brahmin grew impatient, waiting in the darkness where he could hear evil beings stirring in the trees above him.

“Yes, but the Lord said to me, Abide in thy village, and be my ascetic there.”

So Panchkori drew his strength together, as one draws one’s breath together in the chilly dawns of winter, before plunging into the deep bitter water. “Now will I meet this evil deed of mine,” he thought. And openly he said: “Brahmin, that snake which stung thee had no poison.”

“That snake which stung me—had no poison?”

“None. I saw it. It was but such a mud serpent as I knew beside the river, when I was a herd-boy before the Lord found me.”

“Thou sawest it? Yet cut my body to the quick, shedding brahmin’s blood—and without cause! Thou, a herd-boy!”

“Yes.”

“And Gotama let thee do it!”

“The Lord did not know. Only I saw the snake, and what kind it was.”

In his uncontrollable anger the brahmin struck him with the blazing torch; and struck him again. Though the agony of burning was on him, the boy stood his ground unflinching. “Now”, he thought, “my evil deed has met me, and I begin to escape from its meshes. The Lord has saved me from hell.”

“Why didst thou do it? Base-born brat!” The brahmin’s teeth chattered with hatred.

“Because thou hadst reviled the Blessed One.”

Then indeed did the brahmin pause and wonder.

“How did Gotama know what thou hadst done?”

“The Lord asked me how I knew that thou wouldst live. So I told him. The Lord laid on me this penance, that I should return and be thy servant without wages for this month that is to come.”

“Thou hast come to be my servant?”

“It is the Blessed One’s command.”

“Without wages?”

“Yes.”

Then the brahmin called to him one of his

servants, and took from him the bamboo staff he had brought against robbers. With it he beat Panchkori till he could beat him no longer, crying out: "But I will give thee wages! Thou, a child born in shame and sin, to eat the fruit of thy former lives, piercing thy knife into brahmin's flesh!" Finally his servants thrust the boy into a hovel, open to the wind of night. There they left him, sore and limping, and with hands puffed up from the burning of the torch.

That same hour the Tathāgata called to him Moggallana.

"Moggallana, thou hast in thy heart a kindness for Panchkori?"

"I have been unable to sleep from pity, Lord."

"I too have slept little. And it is now in my knowledge that he has met with his own evil deed."

"Then the brahmin has beaten him?"

"The brahmin has beaten him. And he lies sick and in pain, in a hut open to the wind of night. Moggallana, sit thou beside me and meditate—that the boy faint not from the Excellent Law! Let our thoughts go across the darkness and distance to where he is, and let them bring him comfort."

And Panchkori found he could sleep.

In the weeks which followed, Panchkori's mind dwelt much upon a village story, of Ramnath the proud merchant, who was kidnapped by a demon and made to be the demon's servant. Between the race of men and demons flows ever an ocean of hatred; the waters of that ocean washed over Ramnath daily. They washed over this ascetic now.

Trying ever to remember the truths which the Lord had told him, he drove down anger, as a banked-up fire is driven down, and he stood meekly with his bowl held out to receive the rubbish, scraps which the brahmin's household would not or could not eat, flung at him. How swiftly and easily he could have slit the brahmin's throat with his hunter's knife, and have escaped into the hills whose dark shoulders lifted, maned with forest, not ten miles away! It could be done as dusk was falling, and once in those hills no man would ever take him. But he drove down anger, and stood meekly with his ascetic's bowl.

The brahmin starved him, kicked him, reviled him; bade him angrily forth before the dawn's grey eyelids showed; and kept him at menial

tasks until the household from very weariness fell asleep and could plague him no longer.

But it was the brahmin's wife who showed a deftness and skill in cruelty which made the day, though full of painful waking, seem a nightmare in high fever. It was "Beggar's brat! Run hither! More quickly!" and "Child of fornication, why art thou idling again?" And "I will have thee beaten afresh."

He thought to himself: "This is my own evil deed, which the Lord said would grow gentle if I faced it boldly. I must remember the Lord's instruction. I am saving my soul from hell."

It was in the third week that the brahmin suddenly bethought him of the hunter's knife. He saw it at Panchkori's waist, and demanded it. Panchkori looked at him hard; then he gave it over.

"That is the Lord's second mercy," he said to himself. "He has taken from me temptation to a great evil. For the slaying of a brahmin there is no forgiveness, in this life or in any that follows."

He found himself asking himself: "Why should I, who could slay this man and his wife so easily—who could hide in those forests as its own wild creatures hide—endure all this?"

Then he reminded himself: "It is Mara the Evil One who puts such wickedness in my mind." He remembered again the Lord's grave calm coming, on that night of terror and pain. "Beyond doubt, in those eyes shone the Sun of Salvation. He came to free me from the net of rebirth and sin after sin, continued through ages upon ages. Why should he, a prince and a Buddha, have taken thought for such as I?"

He said to himself again: "It was the Lord himself who sent me to this place—as a warrior is sent to guard a post. He knew that Mara the Evil One would seek to seduce me. I will wear *munja*-grass, so that he will know that here is a warrior who has sworn to overcome, though death find him!"

And Mara the Evil One, seeing the herd-boy's mind so firm, said: "I will return at some other hour, for now is no propitious hour to make conquest of him." And his lute fell idly under his arm, as he drooped in disappointment and anger. "Who would have thought that the Tathāgata could have put in a beggar's brat such resolution?" So Mara sighed, foreseeing a time when even *Chandals* would become as *Kshatriyas*, through the strength of the Excellent Doctrine.

But Mara has many paths to the mind's fortress. As an ant, bearing a seed of corn, checked by a twig in its way will find a course round it, as a river, raging against a fallen log, will sweep it aside or flow beyond it by some new channel, so will Mara find his road. And in an hour when the Keeper of the House of Nine Doors is drugged and silent he will make an entry.

A jackal had made its way by night into the cowhouse beside the hut where Panchkori slept, and had killed a new-born calf. The boy was beaten for remissness; he had no right to sleep even in the hour that precedes the first stirrings of dawn. The brahmin's wife had added to pain intolerable insult, striking him with her shoe. With a heart throbbing with misery he had gone afield to pasture the brahmin's cows in a space of open jungle.

In his wretchedness he was careless what should happen. The beasts scattered widely, and he did not see the leopard that crept by covert of bush and gaunt black outcropping rock, until it sprang on a heifer's neck and killed her. Then

indeed, by the stampede and clamour of the cattle, Panchkori found the terrible thing that had happened, and ran too late to the rescue.

The leopard threatened him, growlingly unwilling to leave its prey. But anger made him fearless, and he drove it off for the time being. He could drive off the leopard. But could he drive off the thoughts that agonizingly now assailed him?

He could hear the brahmin's tones—and the tones of the brahmin's wife. "O accursed one! Beyond doubt thy face is a burnt one and altogether hateful! Twice in one forenoon hast thou sinned the eternal sin! It is thou that hast done it, as though with thine own vile hands! Thou hast slain Gomata, the cow that feeds us all!"

He flung himself down in his misery. In that hour did Mara the Evil One again assail him, and with these words and thoughts of wickedness.

"Heedless is the Tathāgata, and uncaring for such as thou. Behold, he is a prince, the son of a king. His life was one of ease and pleasure. How should he know how the poor ones of this earth must suffer? No one has ever beaten Gotama; no man has dared to lift hand against a king's son. But thee he has sent to be a slave to this hateful

brahmin, and this hateful brahmin's wife. And at this hour he is seated in shade of some far-spreading tree, under whose boughs is rest and coolness, and he is meditating on the Excellent Law. Forgetting Panchkori!"

Such words and such thoughts did Mara the Evil One speak, in the silence of the forest waste making his way up to the desolate thrown-down figure. And from listening to such, in the boy's heart sprang up bitterness against the Blessed One. Bitterness; and the child of bitterness, which is unfaith.

Truly then did Mara the Evil One take again his lute from under his arm, that he might play in the ascetic's ears a pleasant beguiling music, taking his thoughts for ever away from the Excellent Doctrine. Now indeed was the jungle of this world about to overgrow the Noble Eightfold Path, making it the abode of the serpents of anger and distrust and malice and desire. And Mara said: "I was mistaken in this ascetic, and he is but a herd-boy after all. Five Cowries is his name, and five cowries is what his soul is worth." And already, in his certainty of conquest, Mara the Evil One began to despise the Lord's disciple, as a prey of little account.

It is said that in that hour the Tathāgata's mind was troubled within him, and he called to him Moggallana and Sariputta. And he said to them: "My mind misgives me, Disciples, for what I have done to the herd-boy whom I found in robbers' bonds in the cave of darkness beside the Kundalini. For I have sent him out to confront his own evil action; and that action is strong and unforgiving, and he has but a little strength for the conflict."

And Moggallana answered: "I too, Lord, have wondered and have asked myself: Has the Lord considered that this disciple is but a herd-boy and young in years? For that brahmin's face, as I saw it, had little of pity or kindness."

And Sariputta sighed, and said: "He had learnt but a little when he was sent forth to Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine. I would have kept him by me, if the Blessed One had willed this, that he might be made strong with instruction."

And Moggallana the Searcher of Spirits said further: "The thought of him breaks in upon my meditations, and because of him my hand falters while I Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine. For my spirit has gone abroad from my body, and to the Dweller in the Innermost has brought

this tidings, that the boy is enduring heavy wrong.”

The Blessed One was silent in sorrow and inward inquiry. Then he said, slowly and with slow unwillingness: “Yet must Panchkori wrestle with his own evil action until he has conquered. For it is borne in upon me that not yet is he fit to Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine. He must see world’s passion and endure world’s anguish; and then will he take the Noble Eight-fold Path, and it shall lead him to a refuge that shall not be taken away from him.”

Like a heavy stone over which the sea-wave washes, and it lies unfeeling and uncaring, even so lay Panchkori, on the lion-grey sands in the spaces between the dry brittle thorn-bushes. Wave following wave comes up to such a stone, and their footsteps rush beyond it and recede again; and it hears nothing. Wave following wave caresses such a stone, with the soft swift movement of swelling or trickling waters; and it feels nothing.

And Mara the Evil One drew up and played his beguiling music.

“**W**hat is thy name?” Panchkori heard a voice ask him.

He lifted his head, but did not look up. In the jungle are many voices, and not all are from human throats. And when our own mind is in fever, there are other voices, which come from imagination’s air and vast wide spaces.

“What is thy name—O herd-boy lying here, neglectful of thy duty? Look up and answer!”

“Five Cowries is my name, and five cowries is my worth. For even so did my father name me, despising me.” He flung down his head again, and in the greatness of his self-compassion he wept.

“*Chi! Chi!*” (Fie! Fie!), said the voice. “Thou a grown man, weeping where all can see thee!”

A grown man! and he had broken down like a child! Panchkori justified the rebuke in his own spirit, and he raised his head and looked at the speaker.

“What is *thy* name?” he asked in his turn.

“Somalata.”

Somalata: the white creeper that flings a mesh of silvery, tiny, trivial flowers over the tops of

the jungle bushes. It was beginning to flower now, as it would flower through the long winter months.

He looked hard at her; and Mara the Evil One, resting the head of his lute under his chin, played the tune with which the celestial dancer Urvasi begins the autumnal session of the Gods on high Kailasa. The season of rains and steaming heat is over, and the Gods are weary of the deeds and thoughts of men. It is then that they gather for festival, and Urvasi plays before them, and their hearts are torn from their bodies and laid asleep in dreams of paradise.

That tune did Mara the Evil One awaken now; it is the tune that comes stealing through the forest to the lonely traveller, at the time of year when new red leaves appear on sal and parul, and the mango grows bright with the tints of another year.

So to the boy, with bruised body and broken spirit, came a cool wind of healing and forgetfulness.

His own Somalata had died in the spring that now seemed a thousand years ago. *Somalata*: his own dead wife had returned bearing her own name but not her own body. And knowing that our spirits pass through birth after birth,

unendingly, awe struck his mind, as though he saw before him the return of the wasted little creature he had laid on the pyre.

This was not his own Somalata in form. The other had been a gentle comfortable being: he remembered the warmth of her body as they lay together during nights of winter when the cold struck to their bones: she was always obedient and uncomplaining, willing to serve and expecting nothing: and he had given her kind words and, when passion stirred him, something better. But she had been painfully plain and simple. It had never occurred to her husband to feel disappointed or cheated, nor would it have occurred to any one else that such feelings would have been justified. His parents had arranged his marriage, and marriage, as every one knew, was for one purpose only, apart from the fact that a man needs some one to prepare his rice at the proper times. He must have a son to carry his spirit forward. And a son, doubtless, Somalata would have borne him, if she had not been sinful in a former birth. It was a pity when she died, for in another year or two she would have certainly been of age to bear him a son.

This Somalata sat down on the earth beside him, and began to question him.

“Whose are these cattle which thou art guarding?”

“The brahmin Devendranath’s.”

“That evil burnt-face’s! He is a man known to all as without pity or kindness. Why didst thou go to his service?”

He told her.

At the end of the story she nodded. “I have heard of thy Tathāgata; he has found salvation. But to me it seems” (she sighed, and her manner was grave and wise) “that for a king’s son it is easy to find salvation. They eat the fruits of good deeds done in former births, which have made them rulers of men in this one.”

And Mara the Evil One leaning low whispered: “She speaks truth. Gotama was a king’s son. He never endured being beaten by the shoe of a brahmin’s wife.”

But not yet was the boy willing to listen with all his mind. As in our toil by day the voices we have heard in dreams may still sound on, so in his spirit he heard the Excellent Doctrine, and a wind still blew from the Vulture’s Peak where he had learnt the Noble Fourfold Truth. In his reply he reproved her.

“Deep and boundless is the Tathāgata, like the sea for depth and fullness of swelling waters.”

“Yes. But his life has been that of a king’s son. None has ever put on him shame such as the brahmin’s wife put on thee this morning! Beating thee with her shoe!”

They were the very words of Mara, whispered to the girl when the boy had failed to accept them, and by her now spoken openly. Panchkori’s mind burned with humiliation and anger.

What was hardest of all to bear was that she herself shared his humiliation and anger. She had made herself his partisan, and took his side. “Thy brahmin”, she repeated, “is a man known to all to be beyond others hateful. And his wife is like himself. A woman loathsome! Her voice is the voice of a crow, and her face is that of a black monkey! To be beaten by the shoe of such!”

And Panchkori, springing to his feet, cried out: “Never will I return to their house or their service! If I had committed the guilt of cow-killing, the hell of service to such would be too great a punishment!”

He started, remembering that in the brahmin’s eyes—and still more, in the eyes of the brahmin’s wife—beyond doubt he would be counted as having committed just this sin.

Somalata answered his secret thought. “As to

cow-killing, I saw the body of a cow of thine which a leopard has killed this morning—while thou wast at guard over the herd! What will thy brahmin's wife say?"

"She will say that the killing was as if it had been done by me."

"Then she will beat thee again with her shoe! But worse than before!"

"She shall never touch me again with that accursed shoe of hers! Let her beat her own husband with it! But I will wring her throat!"

Meanwhile news of the leopard's slaughter of the cow had been taken back to the village by a passer-by who had seen the corpse, and had seen no sign of the herdsman. The brahmin had come out in person, and was shouting: "Panchkori!"

The sound came to them in one of the pauses of the slow September breeze.

"Some one is calling thy name," said the girl.

They both listened intently.

"Panchkori! Base one! Child of vile deeds and an evil rebirth!"

The girl pulled aside stalks of tall white-crested cotton-grass, and peered between them.

"His servants are with him, and they bear

lathis! Perhaps as protection should the leopard return! But they will serve to beat thee when they find thee! Come, Panchkori! I will not see thee beaten again by such!"

She took his hand, and led him unresisting into a dry sunken way through reeds. It was easy for both of them, accustomed to the life of the wild, to make their way unperceived, slipping from shelter to shelter. "Panchkori!" They heard the brahmin's voice die away.

After a mile they reached a place where the ground began to climb, towards the dark-forested mountains. As cultivation fell away and as the thorn jungle gave place to taller better trees, the woodman's happiness returned to Panchkori, and a newer richer happiness besides. "These are the glades wherein my soul exults," he said aloud involuntarily; and then remembered, and was miserable. He sat down disconsolate, and could have wept afresh.

The girl reproved him. "If we linger here the brahmin may catch us. Come! Hast thou no courage or manliness?"

"I have left the Noble Eightfold Path. I have disobeyed the Lord, the Blessed One."

"Thy Tathāgata did not send thee to be beaten by a brahmin's wife with her shoe!" said

Somalata, and pulled him to his feet. They went on again.

They rested at last against a black rock, down whose shining face fell a sliding water, of which they drank.



All this time it had never come to Panchkori to ask her about herself. Nor had it seemed to her that her tale could be worth the telling.

He asked her now, and she told him.

She was of his own caste; and her life, of as little value as his (rather, of less, since a girl's), was exposed to the wilderness where the cattle grazed. She was fifteen, and her husband was dead. She was a drudge, as was right: a woman whose evil deeds in former births had made her a widow in this one.

She accepted her lot, as he accepted his. Human lives fell this fashion, as when dice are flung from a pot; one throw scores double highests, another double lowests. Yet it was not as the dice-throwing is. All was the law, which none may escape.

And Panchkori's mind took her in place of the Somalata who had gone. They were alike in former sinfulness; one had died in childhood, the other had seen her husband die. The boy and girl were two worthless waifs, wandering through forest, as the thistle-seed wanders before the wind.

That noon they gathered wild *jām*-berries, long black shining sweet astringencies, and at evening Somalata found a tree bearing large round yellow plums. And when darkness fell they slept together under the shadow of a rock, with a branching peepul before it.

And Panchkori, who had taken refuge from fear, knew fear again, for he had fled from that refuge and was helpless and without defence. Now the fleeing from that refuge was the first sin; and the second came because of that fleeing, and of fear which had overtaken him, as a swift creature of prey overtakes the slow-lurching heavy bodies on which it feeds—as a soldier mounted overtakes the robber who runs on foot. In his fear he drew close to the warm soft girl beside him, and half dozing she drew close to him also, and between sleep and passion they became man and wife. This was the second sin. Mara the Evil One laughed to himself. "The

Tathāgata has lost his disciple, and I have gained a servant.”

In the half-light that comes in the sky before dawn: comes, and then vanishes, for utter blackness again: as in our own hearts, before wickedness possesses them wholly, come the stabs and lightnings of conscience reviling us: so in that half-light rang out the sudden mocking laughter of a kokil, the bird that makes a jest of man and of all the world. (It proclaims the approach of the sun also.) Panchkori started from slumber, and sat up, sharply awakened.

In the peepul's leaves there was a rustle, though no wind was stirring. He remembered, in that tree the Gods settle. The leaves therefore at all times, whether a wind be stirring or the air be dead and stifled, rustle and murmur, taking tidings of all that men have done and thought and desired. The peepul's leaves were taking that tidings now, and the Gods were listening. “This boy, whom the Blessed One found in bonds and misery in the robbers' cave and called to a refuge, has fled from that refuge. And in this night which is not yet over, lust, which is a fire in the limbs, has burned in his body also, and in the body of the girl whom he has drawn to his side.”

He looked at Somalata, still sleeping. Her clothes lay disordered, and her hair dishevelled and straying. And his mind leapt forward to what must come, and he saw her body, waxlike in death, on the funeral pyre. The night had been warm and fear had made them draw within the cavern's mouth, where it was close and the air came heavily. There was moisture on her forehead, and her breath came sighingly. He felt revulsion and looked away, his mind trembling with misery.

She stirred and turned over. Then her eyes opened, and she smiled.

"Swami!" (Husband).

The name was but a tightening of the bonds he had drawn about him. She would not use his own name, for that is not seemly from wife to husband, until the husband has died.

He looked at her, and the smile on her face faded out. She sat up in alarm and anger. Then she burst out laughing, and threw her arms round his neck. He felt her softness and desirableness again, and they went out hand in hand, from their bed.

They stood there, watching and listening. The night was like some breathing animal all about them. It was silent, yet full of a rustle and

shaking that did not quite reach the plane where it emerged as sound. But it was gathering itself together to burst into sound. And its eyes (which they could not see) were upon this human pair alone in the mountain forest.

It collected the momentum it needed, and the hour struck. Suddenly, out of the very tree above them, rang the wild exultant mockery of the kokil again, and from tree after tree it was answered. And in the east, beyond a craggy peak, thrust up a grey slim finger that was false dawn no longer but the true beginnings of the day. Flowing in, wave upon wave, light induced upon light, as when a dye is poured slowly yet ever steadily into the clearness of water, the dawn came in, and the sky was filled with racing wings and above them a leaping conflagration in the heaven of heavens.

They separated then, and Panchkori gathered a few dry sticks that lay in the cavern's shelter and kindled a fire. Somalata brought him some more, and they warmed their hands and were conscious that they were hungry.

While they were sitting there, warming their bodies and talking, Somalata's attention was caught by two points of brightness in a patch of dry stubble. A partridge was lying close, hop-

ing to escape notice. She made no sign that she had seen him, but with a casual movement, as of her hand plucking another stick towards the fire, she found a stone and flung it hard and true to its aim. The bird sprang up with a flutter and cry. The girl was after it like a hawk.

“Panchkori! Panchkori!” she called excitedly, forgetting that he was her husband. He caught fire from her, and together they rounded up the fugitive. It gave them a run before Somalata had it beneath her hand; but it had little chance, for a wing had been broken by the stone and both of its enemies were skilled in woodcraft. Many a snare for bird and tiny beast had Panchkori set during long hot days beside the Kundalini.

With a deft twist of her hand the girl had wrung its neck, and the body hung limp from her grasp. No brahmin had taken her knife from her, and she was equipped to gut and prepare it swiftly. Then they broiled it on the fire and shared it, and felt comforted.

This was the third sin, the taking of life.

They made their way to yet higher mountains, and built a hut in a valley under a lofty black-maned peak whose name was Meghatori, "Cloud-Boat". It was a good name. Like a boat which the Gods have launched, the peak swam up from the wide-stretching sea of forest—its prow thrusting high to the southward, as if the vessel had just risen out of the trough of a wave. Through the valley ran Niranjala, or Antasalila, "the waterless river". It was not waterless here—it ran with sweet pure current, through white hard sands. Either side the forest came down to the sands' fringes, its trees matted with creepers hanging like an ascetic's locks. And like an ascetic the forest seemed, in the silence and peace of its meditation.

There was water here, for drinking and household uses. In the pools of the Niranjala were fish, which they caught with a net that Somalata made out of tough roots of grass tied with creepers. She was clever at making traps for birds also, and snares to be laid across the hares' pathways.

They were people of little importance, without shame and without dignity.

Panchkori had forgotten that morning in the stifling close comfortless cavern, when he had seen her body under the deathly dew of its mortality. He saw his wife now as she went about her household duties, gay yet full of grave seemliness: as she welcomed him home from snaring or fishing: as they bathed together in the deeper pools of Niranjala, the crystal-shining river. She was as graceful as an otter; pushing her long black hair free of her eyes, she would dive from a rock, and her slim brown body gathering darkness from its wetness would reappear again after a swift passage under the water; she would be seated on the opposite rock ready to return.

Her eyes were as full of lights and shadows as the agates that shimmered under the river, at the place where Niranjala slid smooth-muscled over a slope of gentle falling.

Her hair, inky black as the cloud where thunder lurks, was rarely unadorned by flowers. Sometimes it was the white flowers of the jungle creepers: or chains of fragrant *sephali*, when the dawn strewed the earth beneath its bushes with tiny golden-hearted trumpets. Always, whatever the season, she managed to find flowers.

Their life was like a stone perched on a sharp

needle of rock. While the storms were quiet and no one touched it, it was safe. But a child's finger could dislodge it from its precarious resting-place, and then it must bound from surface to surface, down the steep gulleys below it.

Aware of this, they drew very close to each other, and after all their quarrels knew their mutual necessity too well to continue bitterness. Their world outside also reminded them from time to time that the forest allowed them here only on sufferance. In many ways they were made conscious of this; of the wild things that prowled in darkness.

In the darkness also, when Panchkori happened to be waking, other foes came close. Fear and remorse prowled round the House of Nine Doors, and the spirit that sat within listened and knew anguish.'

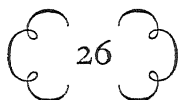
"Ahai!" he wailed. "I am no longer seeking my own evil deed, but have added to it evil upon evil! I am as one who has confronted his enemy and then has fled. That enemy knows my weakness and affright, and in an hour when I am helpless he will seek me out. He will find me, as in some jungle path that tiger in hungry mood may some day find me; and he will not even be alone, but with him will be a band of

other evil actions. I shall surely sink to the deepest hell!"

One evening Somalata touched him as he was dozing off to sleep, and awakened him. In the half-light of dying day he saw her eyes brighter than he had ever known them. "My son is born within me," she told him. "I have felt him stirring under my heart." She drew closer, and with her head resting on his shoulder she went sighingly to sleep, drugged with her great happiness.

Thereafter she went about her work with a smile on her lips, and she was often singing to herself. Then the winter passed, and the spring came: the *bhramor*, the huge Indian humblebee who is the messenger of Vasanta, hurtled into their hut one morning, and that evening they caught the first faint fragrance of the wild mango that grew on the bank above their home. The forest, as the weeks passed, sent out waft on waft of sweetness: after mango, sal and neem. And sent up, too, shaft on shaft of colour: after the tall silk-cotton trees beside the Niranjala had reached their highest pitch of glory, came palas below them, to spread as it were a lower roof or canopy of red-and-white blossoms, mile on mile. And Somalata's body grew slower in its

movements, and she had long periods of rest and of keeping to herself and her own thoughts.



The Rains began, and the storms threatened to blow their hut to the forest's ends. At night they kept a wick burning in an earthen saucer. At any hour they might have to rise and stand together with arms outspread against a shaking inward-surg-ing wall of mud and sticks.

The night was hot and breathless, and towards morning Somalata restlessly tossed her cloth from her. She was asleep as she did this, and did not notice that it fell on the burning wick. The fire ran along the cloth and leapt on to a pile of *biibati*, "candle-seed", dry pods which the jungle dweller uses to furnish oil for his lamps. A flare roared up to the roof, as the hut's wooden skeleton caught flame. Panchkori and Somalata, had they delayed even to pick up a pot or a bowl, would have been trapped under blazing tim-bers. As they raced outside, something snapped in Somalata's body, and she knew her hour had come.

She threw herself down and gave herself up to weeping. Panchkori stared dry-eyed at ruin.

Pain then racked the girl's body. Pain that came at first slowly, and with long pauses in which she tried to do work as usual, cooking a jungle-fowl that had been rescued from the smouldering ashes. Pain that presently came like a storm that gathers speed, sweeping to its fullness.

The fire had overturned their waterpot, and she felt thirst. Panchkori half helped, half carried her to Phuljharana, the Flowery Fountain, laying her where drops trickled into a rock-pool. Drawing him to her she kissed him as though she would never let him go. Then she pushed him fiercely from her.

"Go!" she said. "Go! *Husband!*"

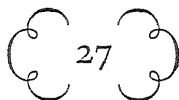
He stood there, dumb and helpless.

"Go!" she repeated. "What is to come is not for thy seeing! It is inauspicious even to think of a husband being by."

Then she smiled, and drew him again to her, and kissed him even more desperately than before. "Go!" she said urgently. "I will recall thee with the koel's whistle"—their sign when one wished to summon the other from somewhere

out of sight but within hearing. "Go!" she almost screamed.

Panchkori went.



An hour passed, and another began. No koel's whistle had called him back. At length he returned unrecalled.

His wife lay dead, her body half turned over and her hand outstretched to draw water from the rock pool. Already in the sky overhead vultures were gathering. Her partly born child was dead also.

How long he lay there sobbing he never knew. At last a hand touched his shoulder, and he looked up. Moggallana was standing by him, and his face was grim. "World's passion has led thee astray, Ascetic; and world's anguish has caught thee, as a straying ox is caught in the thickets where wolves and tigers seek their prey."

The boy's only answer was to fling himself down in renewed ecstasy of weeping. Moggallana seized him by the shoulder more roughly, and pulled him to his feet. Then his face softened

at sight of the boy's misery. His glance travelled down again to the huddled figure on the earth.

"Was she good to thee when thou hadst fled from the brahmin's baseness, this child who has gone?"

"She was a *devi* of compassion and pity."

"There are no such things," said Moggallana. "It is foolish even to use their names. But there are mortal women," he added, with a lowering of the voice, as if in whisper to himself, "creatures of illusion, bodies full of decay and vileness—as the Blessed One has said—yet with hands that carry mercy, and voice and eyes of kindness. It is all illusion," he said, again as a man who speaks to himself in wildness of utter wretchedness, dwelling alone with remembered things that for our peace we should forget. "It is all illusion, yet—as a dream while it passes can seem sweet—so that dream, while it is with us, is surpassingly sweet. Come, Ascetic."

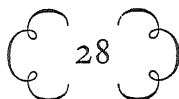
So he led Panchkori by the hand, as a man in trance can be led by the hand, moving amid a world of waking men with eyes open yet unseeing, and he brought him to a company of the brethren. The Blessed One was with them.

Then those ascetics gathered together from the forest dry wood, and made a pyre. And Panch-

kori planted the thorn twig which signifies to the departed spirit that between it and the society of men there is now a hedge, which neither must overpass to have speech with the other. He planted the thorn twig, and uttered the speech of forbidding; but within him his own spirit longed to have word again with Somalata's. Nine months of forest companionship had they shared, joy in the sunlight and dread in the night-time; and it seemed to him as if they had looked into paradise together.

And this was the last and greatest sin, that he should have longed after the comrade who had vanished. That he should have longed, even with the eyes of the Lord upon him, to see that childish face—puckered up from the water, as she shook its drops out of her hair and cleansed her sight, that she might plunge into Niranjala's depths again! This was grievous sin and guilt; and the brethren, seeing how his spirit yearned, said within themselves: "The Blessed One is beyond doubt a mountain of compassion and of trustfulness! Thinking that a herd-boy can attain to tread the Noble Eightfold Path! Such an one will never come to enlightenment! Would the Blessed One make a silken sari out of simul threads?"

But the Blessed One, remembering Yasodhara, the mother of his son, was silent. He looked at Panchkori, in deep sorrow of meditation.



In the days that followed Panchkori was aware of the brethren's thoughts. He was aware of them, but he heeded not. As a man walking to death so he walked, looking neither to right nor left. As a ghost walking through burnt wilderness, so he walked. What was the dry dead stubble of this world to such an one?

Mara the Evil One had had him for a prey. Mara the Evil One still drew his thoughts backward, as when a strong man lays hand on a runner's hair and with firm unyielding grasp draws him from his goal—nay, even turns his head so that he looks on what he had left behind his fleeting footsteps. Even so did Mara draw this ascetic's thoughts back to the clear cool depths of the Niranjala, to the laughing straggle of its waters amid the soft white sands where the kingfishers danced, to the shades of

the forest, to Somalata standing before their hut to welcome him home at eventide.

Yes; and to the terror shared in darkness, to the fierce scorching heats of the fire in exultant clamour above their poor house, to the body helpless and unmoving while her husband set torch to the pyre.

He endured, as a penance laid upon himself by himself, all manner of drudgery for the brethren, and was silent.

Through the Rains they made their way back to Rajgaha and the Vulture's Peak.

Ananda walked with him, Ananda who was still caught in the meshes of love and kindness, not for all beings only but for some more than others. Did not his eyes fill with depth of joy and devotion as they followed the Blessed One? It is good that a child love his father. But if his eyes rest only on his father, and his thoughts follow his father (as a flock of birds follow the cast of the farmer's hand, sowing widely the seeds of corn), what will that child do when death in its cloak of invisibility has rapt that father out of the land of beings that we see? He will surely be desolate, and beaten down by sorrow and anguish!

While they talked together Panchkori saw

often that the Lord's eyes were upon them; and they were the eyes of one in whose heart pity has made its home (like a bird whose nest is in strong branches of a tree on a mountain's height). Yet the Lord said nothing to his disciple.

Morning by morning, ere the first kokils cried, Sariputta roused from slumber Panchkori, and together they Turned the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine, sitting in the half-light, darker silhouettes of shadow—as in the cave of some tree sit ghosts in colloquy, at the hour when only the dead are abroad. “Look not at the sky which is changing to brightness! nor at the birds winging homeward above thee,” Dhammasenapati warned him. “They are but the shows and deceits of Mara the Evil One, who has had enough of thy mind already! They are as this life of ours, which passes from darkness to darkness! Turn, turn with me the Wheel of the Doctrine!”

The Vulture's Peak, a dim cloud at first on the horizon, had become clear and plain. It was the hour of cowdust, when Moggallana drew up to Panchkori while Ananda was with the Lord.

Panchkori thought: “He is the Discerner of Spirits—in whose eyes a hawk sits always! Ahai!

that hawk is his mind, keen of vision and with wings that beat strongly, swiftly, widely, ranging over the secret thoughts of the brethren! He sees things which it is not well for a man to see!" He was full of fear and trembling.

They walked together in silence through the hanging vapours of the hour of cowdust, and through that silence Panchkori felt that the old man was friendly. He needed a friend, and must find one.

"Dadathakur!" (Elder Brother) he said.

The old man was softened. "I listen. Speak, Vairagi!" (Passionless One).

"How did the Blessed One learn" (Panchkori dropped his voice very low) "that I had left the brahmin?"

"The brahmin himself brought word of thy flight. How else?"

"The brahmin himself?"

"Yes. Dost thou remember one Bhutnath, a servant of his?"

Panchkori shuddered. Bhutnath—well was he named, "Lord of devils!" This was the servant who had beaten him, the night when he first came to the brahmin.

Moggallana read his mind. "Hatred will not cease, Ascetic, in those who remember wrongs.

Hast thou not heard the Blessed One say these words?"

"I have heard him. The words are true."

"Hast thou not heard him say also: 'He that has not cleansed his mind of anger is unworthy of the yellow robe, and is no ascetic of mine?'"

"Truly I would cleanse my mind as the Blessed One commands. Yet this Bhutnath was as a Lord of devils to me. Hearing his name, my mind shook with fear within me—as hearing the tiger's roar the rafters of the woodman's hut shake in the forest."

"They shake not if the woodman has taken refuge in the Lord, in the Law, in the Assembly! For he has built him a house that is not for time's overthrowing. Build thyself such a house, little brother. Then, when Mara and his hosts march up against it, though it be the blackest night of the month of evil spirits, they will not be able to make one straw upon the thatch dislodge itself."

"Help me, Elder Brother, to build such a refuge!"

The old man took his arm in the darkness and pressed it kindly. Then he said: "This Bhutnath, the day of thy fleeing—*before* thou hadst fled—came to the Blessed One. He was a man fierce and hard of aspect."

He was, thought Panchkori. And fierce and hard within. Not granite was harder. Nor the viper of the rocks more pitiless and full of poison.

“He came weeping. For he said: ‘I have seen the power of the Tathāgata, and I have seen that my ways and mind are full of wickedness. The Tathāgata has sent to my master a boy of low caste and without training, and that boy my master—and I myself—have beaten and reviled as though he were a beast that would not serve us. This morning my master’s wife has struck him on the mouth with her shoe, and my master has beaten him again for no fault. Yet in all has this herd-boy endured, with a mind like that of the sages who are above fear and above passion (as a tree rooted in the crests of the mountains is above the raging torrents of the valleys far below it). What then must be the Lord of such a boy as this—a boy gentle when we struck him, and without tears or hatred as he bore our cruelty? Will the Blessed One make of me also his disciple—that I may become like this herd-boy?’ ”

Hearing this, Panchkori burst into weeping. He saw now his sin and cowardice. He was as one who, wearing *munja*-grass, has made a wide

path through the ranks of the foeman and has cut his way even to where the chief of their array confronts him, shrinking already to be face to face with doom—as one who at such a moment, when already in Fate's hands the drums of conquest are beginning to sound for him, turns and seeks safety in flight. He had endured the brahmin's cruelty and the brahmin's wife's baseness, and had brought this brahmin's servant to seek the Blessed One! and yet himself had fled ignobly! Ahai! that men should prove so worthless as this boy had shown himself!

He wept, seeing his guilt and folly; and it seemed to him that through the darkness the eyes of the Lord burnt upon him, as the eyes of a torch on the thing that we would see closely. And this was the First Step of Returning, that Panchkori should see his sinfulness.

“And did the Blessed One accept his disciple?” he asked, when he could gather voice again.

“Thou wilt see Bhutnath, thy dread, when we return to Rajgaha. The Lord would have brought him forward with us, that Dhammase-napati might instruct him how to Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine. But Sariputta—who I think has a kindness for a straying ascetic that I know—pursed his lips together, and said: ‘I

would give him another teacher for a while. Let him cleanse the Plot of Poison-Beings for us, slaying nothing that has life and using only his bare hands. That shall be his teacher for a month; and afterwards I myself will teach him also.' ”

“What answered the Blessed One?”

“He asked a question: ‘And what instruction, Dhammasenapati, will the Plot of Poison-Beings give to this new disciple?’ ‘It will teach him patience—and exceeding caution. Also he will learn what suffering is. And what fear is!’ Then the Blessed One asked: ‘And is fear a thing that my disciples should know? Every one who wears the yellow robe has taken refuge from fear.’ But Sariputta answered: ‘True. Yet it is well that some disciples should know—and know well—what pain and fear are, before ever they take refuge from them. It is good that a child should feel the agony of burning—once; or, if the child is obstinate and evil willed, twice or even thrice—that ever after he may know that fire is painful, so that he will not think it a jest to hurt living things by its means.’ To me Dhammasenapati’s words seemed good ones.”

“Did the Blessed One assent to them?”

"I know not if he assented. He was silent for a while, then he said: 'It shall be as Dhammasenapati desires. And when we return——' 'When we return,' said Dhammasenapati, 'I think my pupil will be ready for instruction.' Then the Blessed One—hast thou watched the Tathāgata's eyes, Panchkori?"

"What else is there in the Three Worlds that one should desire to watch?"

"I did not ask thee that. But let it pass. The Blessed One is passionless—above all suffering, all sorrow, all feeling whether of joy or pain——"

"Deep and boundless is the Tathāgata—like the sea for depth and fullness of swelling waters!"

"Therefore shows not in his face ever shadow of grief or joy. Yet I *think*—though even so to imagine is to own to oneself that not yet has the Tathāgata attained to Completeness of Liberation——"

"And to imagine such", said Panchkori, astonished, "is folly complete and undiluted" (*nirjala*—without one drop of adulterating water).

"Truly," said Moggallana drily. "Wherefore it is only this old man's sinfulness that has ever dreamed it. But I was saying that, though none

has ever seen the Tathāgata laugh, yet I myself have sometimes *thought* that laughter sat somewhere in his eyes."

"As when he reminded thee that 'Torpor is one thing. The silence of Aryans in meditation is another thing,' " Panchkori reflected. But he kept his reflection to himself, and for once Moggallana the Discerner of Spirits did not read it. Or he may have read it, for he started and seemed to grunt, before he continued, in dry sardonic tones.

"It so happened that when a matter of nine months had passed, on a day when the Tathāgata and Dhammasenapati were again considering this matter of Bhutnath's instruction, the brahmin himself came."

"The brahmin? Devendranath? My master?" asked Panchkori in amazement.

"What other brahmin? Do brahmins grow on wayside bushes? He came full of fear and abasement, for his servant, whom the Blessed One had sent to him, had left him and there had been no return. He had remembered also his other servant who had gone, this Bhutnath; and at the season of breaking of storm and thunderings he had chidden himself, saying: "What manner of Tathāgata is this, that for a mere trifle of an

untruth spoken by his disciple to a man who had reviled him sends that disciple back to make atonement and to be a slave to his reviler? And what manner of a disciple is it that, at the Tathāgata's command, goes back to confess his sin when it was unsuspected and none could have found proof—who goes to be beaten and abused, and who endures as that herd-boy endured? And now this herd-boy has been recalled by his Lord, and my chance of salvation has been taken from me—because I was base and full of villainess—ahai! because my steps must lead me to the nethermost hell! Therefore let me also seek out the Blessed One and become his disciple! That my steps may not lead me to the nethermost hell!’ ”

Again revulsion took hold on Panchkori. “And shall I see also Devendranath the brahmin when we return to Rajgaha?”

“No. For the Lord, thinking perhaps of Dhammasenapati's words concerning Bhutnath, that cruel and pitiless man, said to him: ‘Not now, but when the earth knows a season of rest from labour, come and be taught to Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine—when the month of Kartik is finished, which is five months hence.’ And the brahmin cried, interrupting: ‘But may

I not become thy disciple? May I not receive instruction?' So the Lord said: 'Truly. And this is the first command I lay on thee, brahmin. Tell me, are there not any poor, wretched ones who are leprous and full of pain, in the place where thou livest?' 'There are many such,' replied the brahmin. 'Creatures who for their evil deeds in former births endure suffering in this one.' 'Even so,' said the Lord, 'as thou, brahmin, for thy good deeds hast happiness and high rank in this one!'—'*and* a most vile and evil spirit,' said an old man who is the Tathāgata's disciple, but said it to myself. So the Lord said: 'Return, and call together a thousand of these poor ones, and let them live in thy fields and sheds, and feed them daily as thy brethren and sisters, with love and gentle words.' But the brahmin, upon whom was still the greatness of his fear when he found both thee and his servant fled from him, begged the Tathāgata: 'Give me an instructor now! that I may begin to pay in this life the punishment of my baseness towards thy disciple whom thou hast recalled!' "

"Recalled?" said Panchkori.

"Even so. Did I not explain to thee that the Blessed One did not tell the brahmin—perchance

he forgot; or did not think it matter of necessity to make it clear—that thou hadst fled from him? The brahmin therefore desired punishment now, that when he travels hence into the blindfold land he may not find his sin awaiting him; and desired also an instructor in the way of patience and endurance. And the Tathāgata said: ‘I will give thee all that thou askest. Now return.’ So the brahmin returned, wondering. Then Ananda questioned the Tathāgata, speaking for us all. ‘The brahmin has gone back alone, Lord. How shall he find that punishment and that instructor for which he begged?’ And the Tathāgata replied: ‘They are awaiting him, in the home to which he is returning.’ ”

As they talked together the rain began again; through mud and discomfort they struggled onward, and the Vulture’s Peak was hidden by clouds. Moggallana read Panchkori’s thought. “Thy mind is asking thee: ‘Why has the Tathāgata, against his wont, journeyed across these bitter lands, and through this bitter wind that is a net of blindness and discomfort, in this season when it is his custom to abide in one place and there to Turn the Wheel of the Law with his disciples?’ ”

“That was indeed my thought.”

“*Thou* art the reason! When the brahmin had gone, the Lord said: ‘There is a disciple of mine who is entangled by Mara the Evil One, as a hare is entangled in the noose that has caught it; and world’s anguish is about to overcome him.’ So one of the ascetics said to him: ‘I will go and seek until I find Panchkori.’ And Ananda and Dhammasenapati said: ‘We will go also.’ The Lord therefore took with him these three, and some others, and we found our way to the mountain where we saw thee.”

And this was the Second Step of Returning, in the remorse and humiliation that beat down Panchkori’s mind.

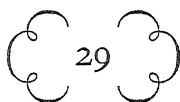
They had reached the place where they were to rest, an orchard of shady mango trees. The night was as breathless as the day, and silence filled the Ten Directions. The boy was weary with sorrow and the burning pain of his own mind within him; he sank down, and with head thrown on his arms wept. He had forsaken the Noble Eightfold Path, and forgotten the Lord who had found him in bonds.

A hand was on his head, and a voice bade him look up. He did so, and saw that it was the Tathāgata.

“Let no man despise this disciple,” said the

Tathāgata. "Not even this disciple himself!"

Moggallana with a swift impulsive movement knelt before the Blessed One and touched his feet in adoration.



Next day they climbed the Vulture's Peak, attaining its summit ere night. As they reached the huts of shelter, Vajrapati the King of Tempests beat his drums for battle, and his armies advanced. Line after line they came, rolling up endlessly, elephants of storm, dark, inky-dark, the blue-dark clouds of the monsoon. Then crashed the bolt, rending the tallest trees asunder; the rain fell in cataracts from the heaven's height. All creatures of the forest trembled and hid themselves, and the birds crouched in deep shelter.

Then those ascetics, watching the world in convulsions, rejoiced as men who have found a refuge! As men who are safe on the very brink of warring myriads locked together in death and suffering! They remembered the Lord's Discourse of the Terrors of Storm. "All things are

Storm, Disciples! In storm we came, and in storm we shall pass away."

And Ananda, watching in exultation, made this poem and sang it:

*"This is the music that has won my praise!
The crash of trees, the thunder's clangour loud,
The waters pouring from the ripped-up cloud,
The torrents tumbling from the shaking height,
The incessant 'kruk-kruk' of the frogs' delight—
When darkness comes at noon and dawn delays,
When men sit close and shun the flooded ways—
This is the music that has won my praise!*

*I watch the storm; red-eyed he threatens my life,
He wields a club! the lightning is his knife!
But I have found a Refuge! None shall draw
Me from the Lord, the Brethren, and the Law!
Though the world break and the whole zodiac
reel,
I sit at ease and Turn the Doctrine's Wheel!
Shatter and shout, friends of the cloud-wrapt
ways!*

Yours is the music that has won my praise!"

"That is excellently thought, Ascetic," said the Tathāgata. "But the music will be none the less entrancing if thou and I sleep on dry beds to-night. And I think it was *thy* task to have

closed the hole through which the rain now pours.”

So Sunita the flower-scavenger and Ananda the Lord's cousin raised Panchkori on their shoulders, and he shut out the torrent that was descending from the roof.

“What is wet straw to an ascetic?” asked Moggallana, and even Sariputta smiled.

“Truly, nothing,” said the Blessed One. “Yet is a dry bed to be desired—when by having it we do no wrong to any living being. And to swim while I also try to sleep is *not*, O Ananda, anything in which my soul exults.”

Then the Assembly, seated in covert from the storm, Turned the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine. And the Lord, seated hero-fashion before them, spoke the Discourse of the Ill-Thatched House.

“As rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, so, Ascetics, will passion break through an unreflecting mind.

“And as when the tempests flood the world the creatures of the earth seek a shelter in men's abodes, even as that cobra that is now gliding behind thee, Panchkori—nay, stir not, move not a hand or even an eyelid; he is at peace with thee and desires only a refuge where he may be dry—

as serpents and scorpions and lizards and frogs and winged things and things without wings, as all these crowd into our houses, so does the wearer of the yellow robe seek a shelter in the Doctrine. When the tempest of age and death begins to beat and ravage round this House of Nine Doors, the wearer of the yellow robe says: 'It is nothing. There is but a wafting of the dust outside and a cleansing of the air. What is all this to me?'

"And as when the creatures full of poison come into our homes—that cobra is behind thee, Eklochon; nay, stir not, move not a hand or even an eyelid; he is at peace with thee, and is merely wondering if it will be better to pass to the corner which he has chosen, by gliding under thy legs (there is room, if thou remainest still) or to go behind thee, which will be longer—as when these creatures come into our homes, so when tempest assails the mind come Mara the Evil One and the passions which serve him and bear his poison. Ahai! then into the mind come lust and malice and remembrance of wrongs, to sting the false ascetic that he die.

"Thatch well this House of Nine Doors! Close its entrances! See well to the roof, and before the tempest of old age assails it!

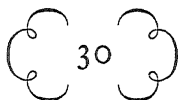
“Cover the roof with the thatch of repentance. Take the rafter of pity for all living things, so that they may be at peace with thee. Over it lay the palm-leaf of meditation on the Noble Eightfold Path—Right Thinking, Right Planning, Right Speaking, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Frame of Mind, Right Rapture. With the tar of self-forgetfulness bind all these together. Then will this House of Nine Doors be thatched! And as rain falling on a well-thatched house falls to the earth outside, so will passion fall from the roof of this mind and body.”

From the forest outside came the sound of a hyena, going from them. In this Hut of Assembly he had made his lair, all through the months that had passed since the Lord and the brethren were here last. Coming now to it he had seen that the Assembly were there, and he went away disappointed.

“That is the cry of Mara the Evil One,” said the Lord, “when he has come to the wearer of the yellow robe. ‘Ahai! for me there is no longer any place here!’ He goes away in sorrow and pain of spirit.”

Then those ascetics, listening to the beast of ravin as he went from them, said: “It is the cry

of Mara the Evil One, who knows that for him there is no place here! We have taken refuge in the Lord, and in the Assembly, and in the Doctrine!"



The Rains passed, and the time of rice-harvest, and the winter. But not from Panchkori's mind passed the memory of what he had endured in the forest, or of the child-life that had been given to him. All this the Blessed One saw, but he spoke not yet to his disciple.

Spring came, and the winds were scented with the mango-groves in flower. On the full moon day of Phalgun, the Red Month, there arrived from the country of the Sakyas Kaludayin, King Suddhodana's Minister. He was Gotama's old playmate and companion, and the Blessed One's father had sent him to reawaken memory and to beg his son to return.

Said Kaludayin:

*"This, O Ascetic, is the month of power!
Red is the world, with trees in crimson flower—
Palas and parul! Give desire its scope!"*

Strikes now the auspicious hour, hour big with hope!

*The cold is gone, the warm days come apace,
Temperate are day and night, and full of grace,
His tail of myriad eyes the peacock shows,
With myriad eyes of buds the green wood glows,
The black bee hums, the birds are full of song,
Pleasure and comfort to the time belong.*

“Now is the time to travel. Come then! Thy father would see thee. Thy wife and son desire thee.”

Hearing these words, the Lord was silent. But he watched Ananda, and in his heart shone the brightness of compassion and love for his disciple.

Kaludayin urged: “All men in the country of the Sakyas desire to see again the Prince who should be their ruler when the King thy father has ascended to the Palace of the Sun. Come then, O greatly longed for! the land is full of thy remembrance, as of sweetness the season (from the winds that travel laden).”

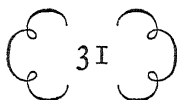
The Blessed One, not looking at him, asked Ananda: “What sayest thou, Ascetic? Is it good that we return to the country where Maya was a film over our eyes—over thine and mine.”

“Deep and boundless is the Tathāgata,” an-

swered Ananda, "like the sea for depth and fullness of swelling waters. What have I his meanest servant to say in this?"

Then the Lord turned to Kaludayin. "Go, tell the King, my father: 'Not now nor at this season will I visit again the land of the Sakyas. Does the farmer leave his fields at the time of sowing? Or when the fruits are ripening in the sun?'"

So Kaludayin went back and reported as the Tathāgata had spoken.



Phalgun ended; and Chaitra came, a flower-tide washing the banks of the trees with wave on wave of sweetness. Chaitra ended, and it was Vaisakh; and the last scarlet bowls of the simul were ready for the storm that would toss them from the boughs and sound the drums of summer entering to take possession of all things.

One morning, the Lord said: "Ananda, it is in my mind to visit my own country again."

Ananda was stooping down, blowing red ashes into flame for the cooking of the breth-

ren's rice. He drew himself erect, and his spirit flushed with gladness. "Often and often it has been in my mind to ask the Blessed One to return to his country and mine. I would see again the far-spreading fields of the Sakyas and the white line of the mighty hills that I loved as a child."

The Blessed One was silent. Then he said, but as if to himself, though he named his disciple: "Ananda, it was in the month of Vaisakh that I Found Enlightenment."

They journeyed through the growing heats, resting under broad trees at noon and travelling before the sun was at his power, and again in the cool of the evening. And they reached Kavilavatthu, the city of the Sakyas and of Suddhodana, the Lord's father.

Now before the Blessed One reached the city the rumour of his coming drew the people all abroad. As a centre of lotuses in the midst of wide floods is lost in the swelling waters, so was that band of yellow-robed ascetics lost in the thronging crowds that came to do obeisance. The husbandman forsook his yoke of oxen, the housewife her evening cooking; and as a raft is borne along by the river, so was the Tathāgata borne along by the Sakyas. "Ulu! ulu!" cried

the women from the housetops and balconies, and scents of jasmine and rose and sandal were showered on Siddhartha the Prince. King Sudhodana had sent his musicians and buffoons and dancing-girls, and before the Lord and his disciples they marched playing and tumbling and dancing.

Silent behind the throngs walked the Blessed One, and before the King's palace stood with his beggar's bowl held out for alms.

The King his father had arrayed himself in his hero-robcs to receive his son. But they told him: "The Prince Siddhartha stands in the street openly as a beggar and with bowl held out he asks for alms."

The King then, being overcome with shame and anger, sent his servants, saying: "Why hast thou brought humiliation on thy line and on me? Thou art a king's son and prince of this great people. Fie on thee, to stand in my streets as a beggar!"

"It is my custom," answered the Tathāgata.

"No custom of Kshatriyas!" said the King, when he heard this answer. "It is Kshatriya custom to win wealth and conquest with the sword: to beat down the wicked and to succour the righteous. Never has it been known that a

Kshatriya should stand in saffron robes with beggar's bowl extended to the passers-by!"

"Say to the King my father," replied the Blessed One, "'Thy line, O King, is truly the Kshatriya line. But mine is a lineage far other, and of longer record. Many thousands of Buddhas have gained their livelihood by begging—even as I do.'

*"A beggar into life I came, with hands
Empty of strength and wealth—clinging and
crying.*

*Begging was all my realm, a babe's demands!
Weakness that wept and would not brook
denying!"*

They told these words to King Suddhodana.

That night, as they rested in a banyan grove, Moggallana and Ananda lay close to Panchkori. It was a night of half-lights and greyness, the stars very bright in the heavens—and the moon a crescent midway to fullness, veiled by the dust which the multitudes' trampling had sent up and was still sending up, for the people refused to be quiet but congregated in the streets, crying out their Prince's name.

Moggallana, seeing that Ananda, like himself, could not sleep but was in the hero-seat, meditating—and he knew on what he was meditating

—said softly: “Ananda, the Lord is in sorrow and torment of heart.”

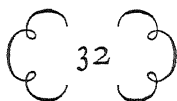
He pointed to a figure standing statue-silent beyond the banyan’s shadow.

Ananda nodded, and said nothing. He remained in the hero-seat, in meditation.

After a while Ananda spoke as if to himself (but Panchkori and Moggallana caught the words). “Will the Blessed One see the Mother of Rahula?”

As when one is plucked by the garment from behind—not knowing that any other is present—so the motionless figure beyond the banyan’s shadow started. Yet Ananda’s words reached only Moggallana and Panchkori.

Panchkori presently drowsed, and when he awoke it was dawn, with the crowing of jungle-cocks in the hills by the city. The figure that he had seen in the darkness before he slept was still standing motionless beyond the banyan.



After it had become day, many nobles of the Court of King Suddhodana, the Lord’s

father, came and had speech with the Blessed One. Many ladies of the Court came also. But Yasodhara the Mother of Rahula came not.

To the Princess then spake her attendants, saying: "All the city has gone to do reverence to the Prince thy husband, who has returned to his kingdom. Go thou also; it may be that seeing thee love will awaken, and thy words may win him to leave this beggar's life and become our Prince again."

The Mother of Rahula answered: "If my Lord has left his kingdom, it is because he sought a better kingdom. And if he has left aught else that was his, why should I his servant think that my words can win him back?"

They said: "But he is thy husband! Thy master! Wilt thou not go and do him reverence? All men and women, save his wife and father only, have gone to his presence!"

She replied, with her voice low and her face drooping: "If I have any worth in his eyes, my Lord will come himself to speak with me, and when he comes" (her voice fell lower, and was but a whisper to the Dweller in the Innermost—bending low in his secret place of darkness he caught it and answered: "Daughter, thy words are well.") "I his wife will do him reverence."

So her attendants, gazing at her, thought: "Sorrow has crazed her brain and made her shameless! To forget her Lord's greatness and to say: 'The Prince Siddhartha *himself* must come to my presence!' Such wickedness comes only to women who are base and of no birth—or to those whom pain has beaten down to exceeding sinfulness!" They went to Ananda the Lord's cousin and told him what the Mother of Rahula had said to them.

Ananda, motioning them to stand aside, said: "Wait till I have speech with the Blessed One. I will surely tell him what the Mother of Rahula has said."

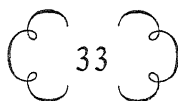
They, astonished, asked: "Wilt thou repeat words of such shamefulness and pride—to Siddhartha the King's Son?"

"Not to Siddhartha the King's Son," answered Ananda. "But I shall say them to the All-Enlightened One. And perchance, saying them to him" (he spoke to himself softly) "I shall reach the ear of Siddhartha the Father of Rahula—if still he lives in the Lord's memory!"

That hour came forth Suddhodana the King, having conquered anger and humiliation. He came, not as a King should come, with heralds that called his names and titles, and musicians

playing, and soldiers that bade the people stand aside and do obeisance. But as an old man in simple robes, white-haired and lean and with sunken eyes in the face which the years had lined and sharpened.

King and Ascetic came face to face, and gazed at each other while men might count a hundred. Then Suddhodana said: "Now know I that my son has passed from me into the eternities. He has won a kingdom that endures; and my kingdom which changes from day to day—and which in a short space of years shall be mine no longer—is a kingdom which his eyes have forgotten! As a drop of light that falls through a night of crowded stars is forgotten when it has gone."



He said: "I am old, and kingship is my only trade. I must stay where my lot has placed me, and be a ruler and judge to this people of the Sakyas. And soon Death, like a master who calls his servant, will summon me hence."

He paused; and as a tongue of fire will rise up suddenly out of ashes that have whitened, so

hope quickened (faintly and even in its awakening faded). He asked: "Is my son's mind fixed, that he will not return to this people who desire him?"

The Lord's face was his answer. Bowing his head, the King spoke low. "Let the Blessed One count me as his disciple—though I may not leave my people of the Sakyas."

The Lord turned, and to the King his father he gave his bowl. "Take this, disciple, and beg for me." And to Ananda and those who were standing by he said: "I go to Yasodhara, the King's daughter. The King's daughter may do reverence in the way she has chosen, she is not to be blamed."

As he made his way through the people, they whispered, passing this speech from side to side: "Our Prince returns to Yasodhara, his wife. He will surely become again our ruler, and will leave this beggar's existence!"

With him he took his chief disciples, Sariputta and Moggallana and Ananda his cousin. Yet there seemed in his mind some word of question, for he halted and gazed behind him. Then he saw Panchkori, and: "Come, Ascetic!" he called him; and went on his way again.

At the house of Yasodhara the Princess the

Lord entered, and took his place on the seat appointed. The King also, bearing his begging-bowl, entered with him, and his four disciples. Came swiftly Yasodhara the Mother of Rahula, and threw herself at his feet, weeping; his feet she took and placed them on her head, crying for grief and gladness. The Lord lifted her up and gazed in her eyes and touched her face with his hand. And through his eyes passed the shadow of exceeding anguish—as over a mirror will fall, when a man is gazing into it (at the hour when day is failing) the shadow of a spirit, seen behind his shoulder—seen there for a moment (as the bodiless forms of those that dwell elsewhere, in the land of dreams and things that are over, may be seen in their rising and departure).

Suddhodana the King of the Sakyas said: “Lord, Yasodhara my daughter, when she heard that you wore the saffron robe, put on the ascetic’s robe also and her dresses were laid away. When she heard that my Lord was eating but one meal daily, she herself did the same. When she heard that my Lord had given up his bed and slept on stones and earth and on a grassy couch beside the Phalgu, she herself slept on the ground. When she heard that the Lord her husband had given up garlands and scents, she her-

self gave them up. Other kings' sons desired her, this wife whom her Lord had forsaken, but she rejected them all."

The Lord, still holding in his arms Yasodhara (yet, as she stood there, she knew that hope was finished; it was not her husband that held her; but the hands of infinite pity, that saw how birth is suffering, death is suffering, all life, for all sentient beings, is suffering, these hands upheld her), said: "Know, in a former life——"

He put her from him, even as he addressed her: "Mother of my son Rahula." And he said: "In a former birth thou wast my wife in a kingdom far from this land of the Sakyas—a Kinara in the high court of Maghavan the Ruler of All. And a prince who was faint for thy love shot thy husband with a poisoned arrow, and I died, and my body lay in thine arms, beside a river whither the Gods resorted. And thou the dead man's wife put shame upon them, crying aloud: 'Are there no Lokapalas, no World's Guardians? Have they gone to other planets? Or are they dead? or diseased and helpless? that they cannot protect my Lord!' And the World's Guardians heard thee, and restored me to life—so great and so prevailing was thy love!"

Over that face passed again the shadow that

had vanished, and Siddhartha the King's Son was seen in his eyes as he asked: "Rahula, my son——?"

She looked before her, steadfast through her tears. "He is of an age with this boy," she said, and pointed to Panchkori. "He is like him, princely and erect of limb." (She knew not that he was but a herd-boy. She thought within herself: "He is my Lord's disciple. Those that are close to king's sons, though they are ascetics, must themselves be of warrior caste, as is Ananda, my Lord's cousin, who is here.")

She drew him forward—she a princess, drawing a herd-boy to her, and putting her arms about him! But illusion blinded her, so that she knew not what she did! And the boy's face flushed for shame, that he should be held in the arms of a princess! And her beauty was a grief to him, and to all that saw her, that this also should be subject to sorrow. As the moon in autumn, golden and free from shadows (for the steaming mists are finished and on the roads the dust whirls no longer—and in the fragrant groves, where the night-flowers are blowing, there are cool quiet breezes which are like gods walking in silence)—even so was this lady.

We ourselves, Ascetics, are as a moon that is

waning and must pass into utter blackness. The sun is dying: the stars are dying: the seasons change and vanish. All things, Ascetics, are in decrease and dying. The winds that had wafted sweetness round the King's son and this lady had been asleep these many years.

Yet—this was Yasodhara the mother of Rāhula. And with her was Siddhartha the King's son.

And, as a breath will rise up softly at evening and from the sephali flowers that have fallen will bring a memory of the sweetness that has been swept to its grave on the earth, so from the dead years came remembrance. And again his disciples thought: "In the Tathāgata's mind is shadow of that grief which the unenlightened know. Surely that gate has been passed for ever; and the Blessed One has gone through it and found release! Why then this shadow and image of returning?"

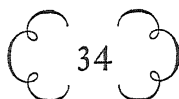
The Lord took from Yasodhara his wife the herd-boy his disciple, and as a man in a dream walking he went out from her and from his father. And to Panchkori his disciple, gazing on his face, he said: "All things are sorrow, Ascetic. Love and the clinging to another is sorrow. It is sorrow when the beloved one lies dead before us."

“Lord, I know that.” And Panchkori drooped his head, remembering.

Then the Lord asked again that question which he had asked by the waters of Kundalini that flow softly. “Dost thou seek a refuge, younger brother?”

“Lord, I seek a refuge.”

“Come then, Ascetic. And forget the sorrow that is finished.”



The Lord then, gathering together his disciples (and behind them thronged a vast multitude of the Sakyas), in the market-place of the city spoke the Discourse of Bonds and Binding.

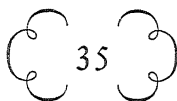
“All things, Disciples, are in bonds. The tree is bound in earth by its roots: within the body the brain is bound by nerves and sinews: even the clouds, which to sight appear to be free and rejoicing, are in bondage to the wind that is their driver. The love of parent and child is a bond; and when a child is born, then are we fast in chains of love (which is delusion and sorrow),

of helplessness and crying, and of world's opinion which says: 'A child has been born to thee. Thus and thus is it now thy duty to act and purpose.' ”

The crowd were silent, remembering that the Lord's own son was named Rahula, "he that has seized thee and made thee a prisoner". Ahai! for all things are in bonds and bound together as in strong fetters! When, O God, wilt thou send a Deliverer to thy children whom thou hast set in chains?

"All things, Disciples, are in bonds. All things that befall us are as bolts and imprisonment. But of all bonds this is the strongest—of all pains this is the fiercest and—and sweetest—and therefore it is by this bond that Mara the Evil One leads us captive!"

And all men knew of what bond he spoke.



After seven days the Mother of Rahula arrayed her son in king's garments, and girded him with a sword and on his shoulder set a quiver. In his hand she put a bow. She sent

him to the Tathāgata, with this message: "Give now thy son his inheritance."

"Say to thy mother", said the Blessed One, "that wealth which thou desirest must waste away and rust into unsightliness. I will give thy son and mine the sevenfold noble treasure which I received at the Bo-tree's root. I will make him lord of an inheritance beyond this world."

So his son Rahula took refuge in the Lord, in the Doctrine, and in the Assembly. Dhammasenapati became his instructor.

Then came King Suddhodana again, and he said: "Lord, when my son left the world, to me his father it was sorrow and pain of heart. Now is it sorrow and pain for Rahula my grandson also, who has joined thy monks (and Yasodhara his mother lies close to death). He was a boy who sat with me (as in years that are done with my own son who is now my Lord sat with me) in the place of judgement and watched, and was himself a consenting voice. Let not my son count me unworthy to be his disciple if I say to him this one word! The love of a son is as a sharp spear, cutting through skin and flesh and sinew, through bone and marrow. Grant, therefore, that from henceforth none shall enter the

Order without first the permission of his father and mother!"

"If the Lord grant that", said Moggallana, "will any enter the Order until he is old?"

Nevertheless the King stood there steadfast, gazing at the Lord his son, and said: "I have made my request."

And the Lord promised: "Henceforth none shall enter the Order without first the permission of his father and his mother."

Devadatta, the Lord's cousin, said to the people secretly, "What now will befall this country of the Sakyas? For the Prince has become an ascetic and the King his father is old; and Rahula has followed his father. The country of the Sakyas will surely become like a boat that has no helmsman, when the waves are wildly leaping!"

Many of the people also said angrily: "Because of this Tathāgata fathers refuse to beget children. Because of him wives are made widows, and families die out heirless."

As they went their way they drew near the Rohini, whose stream was the boundary between the fields of the Sakyas and those of the Koliyas (whose princess was Yasodhara the Lord's wife). In its bed was hubbub of men shouting and brandishing weapons. The ascetics saw on either bank warriors gathered for conflict.

The Blessed One entered their midst, and commanded: "From either side send to me six of the chief men."

They came as he commanded, and he asked them: "Why, when you have lived together as neighbours since first the Aryans entered the country of King Bharata, are you now assembled for war?"

They told him: "Because the season is that of heat and drouth, and these robbers"—each naming the other—"would take for their fields the waters of this river."

"Whence come its waters at the first?"

"Lord, they are shed from the snowy shoulders of Himalay."

"Whose land are those mountains?"

“They are the abode of Gods and demons
None walks there! Save creatures whose faces
look across their bodies and watch their follow-
ing shadows! Who would dare to pitch his tent
where such and such have their home? Even to
approach is to find the head giddy, the breath
strangled in the throat, the eye full of misery!”

“And if those”, asked the Blessed One of the
Sakyas, pointing to the Koliyas, “persist in draw-
ing off this water, which is the gift of Gods and
demons, what will come of it?”

“Slaughter and dire penalties,” answered the
Sakyas; and their gaze was that of lions coming
to battle together. The same answer made also
the Koliyas.

“Then the season of sowing and of planting
the young rice, paddling it firmly down in the
soft mud, will pass idly, for ploughman and
sower will be ashes on the burning-ground!
Mother and child will perish of hunger, and the
wild beasts of the forest will roam through your
fields!”

“But our faces will be blackened”, urged one
of the Sakyas, “if to the threatening words of
these base ones we make not answer as Kshatriyas
should—with clash of spear and winging of fiery
arrows.”

Even so would the Koliyas have made answer. But Ananda, the Lord's cousin, forestalled them with this word: "So to save your own esteem with yourselves you would blacken the faces of your kinsmen across this stream! for Yasodhara the Mother of Rahula was the daughter of the King of the Koliyas!"

The Lord heard him, or perchance heard him not—so swiftly did he ask this question: "This water for which you would shed men's lives—is it tethered in its place, as men tether a goat where it should feed?"

"By no means. It is flowing and makes no stay in any pool or shallow."

He said then: "Let the Koliyas for this day have freedom of drawing water, and let the Sakyas dig their channels for them. Even so tomorrow let the Sakyas draw water, and the Koliyas dig. Are the white shoulders of the mountains a well which men have made? There is water for all, and when both have drawn for their day the river will be flowing still. And in three weeks will the Rains brim its vessel from shore to shore and far over your fields."

As they went forward, he caught murmurings, from some who said: "Ananda has broken the law of our Order, speaking when all were silent, waiting for the Blessed One's words! And moreover he spoke of the Mother of Rahula, a bond which the Lord has snapped and shattered—as a lion caught in a snare that was set for some weak creature snaps and shatters those fetters! Surely for such a fault there should be penance!"

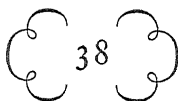
The Lord halted in the way, and rebuked them. "Perchance Ananda was but my mouth-piece, and the thought within me sprang from my mind to his lips. He spoke of a king's daughter, to those who would slay her brethren." And he went on his way.

But Devadatta the Lord's cousin murmured still, and said: "What is this, that the Tathāgata should let his words be taken before him? And should let his disciple speak of bonds that are done with, that woman and Rahula her son? This herd-boy also, who proved unworthy and full of lust and all sinfulness, has he received back,

and to-day taken to a King's daughter's presence, as one of his chief ascetics!"

Panchkori's heart was troubled, hearing these words. "It is true! and for this did Somalata die, because of my sinfulness!"

The Lord replied not to Devadatta his cousin. But to Panchkori, turning, he said: "Panchkori, if a child faint under a burden too great for his strength, the father says: 'It was not my son's fault, that he should be blamed overmuch. It was mine, for forgetting that he was but a child and full of weakness.'"



On the seventeenth day after they had left the country of the Sakyas, at the hour of cowdust the Tathāgata rested on the Elephant Rock, and his disciples sat around him. In the valley far below was the city of Rajgaha, and fields that waited for the coming of rain.

In that hour the sun's heat striking on flint and dry grasses kindled a fire which raged afar through the forest. Overhead flew the birds from that torment, and the wild creatures be-

low them sought a path of escape. Then the Lord spoke the Discourse of Raging Fire.

“All things, Ascetics, are aflame. The eye is aflame, the visions that enter it are aflame, and the thoughts which from perception of this outside show of things pass to the Dweller in the Innermost. The forms of living men and women are aflame, and of deities and demons also. The world is aflame, and wasting and waxing, and waxing and wasting. The sun is aflame, the moon and stars are aflame. All life everywhere is aflame, from the secret fire that hides in the tree and flower to the blazing furnace of the heavens above us. All things, Ascetics, are aflame.

“The mind, Ascetics, is aflame. The blood, Ascetics, is aflame. All life, Ascetics, from birth to dying, is aflame.

“What is this flame, Ascetics? It is the fire of lust and yearning, the fire of hatred and wrath and passion. This fire burns within us, and from birth to dying our life is aflame. Boyhood and prime of strength, old age and weakness and death and mourning and wretchedness and joy and excitement and pleasure and despair—all are set aflame with this torch of burning.

“As a fire when its fuel is devoured dies down, so when the desire for living and for the things

of this world is destroyed does this fire die down. As a fire when one heaps on it fresh fuel, so this fire springs up renewed as the body, like a servant bringing logs and straw together, heaps on it sensations.

“Within us burns this fire. Fiercely it smoulders, never at rest. Sleep is aflame, Ascetics, our waking hours are aflame, our dreams are aflame. Who are the servants that feed this fire?

“They are the Six Passions, the Six Senses. The eye looks abroad and it sees things bright-moving and decked in colours that stir up lust and longing. The eye sees these things and it brings to the fire within us the impression of things to be desired. The eye, Ascetics, is aflame. The eye is a servant that gathers fuel.

“The hearing, Ascetics, is aflame. It listens and it says: ‘This sound is sweet, it arouses within me vigour and passion and lust for existence. It brings to the fire within us the impression of things to be desired. The ear, Ascetics, is aflame. The ear is a servant that gathers fuel.

“The sense of smell, Ascetics, is aflame. As a strong horse uplifts his head and with his nostrils smells out the pasture, so the nose, Ascetics, feeds itself on pleasant fragrances and lascivious scents of king’s palaces. The nose brings to the fire

within us the impression of things to be desired. The nose, Ascetics, is aflame. The nose is a servant that gathers fuel.

“The hand and foot, Ascetics, are aflame. The hand feels the softness of down or silk, and it brings to the fire within us the impression of things to be desired. The sense of touch, Ascetics, is aflame. It is a servant that gathers fuel.

“The mouth and palate, Ascetics, are aflame. They taste the food and they say: ‘This partridge flesh is rich and good, this mango truly is delicious.’ They bring to the fire within us the impression of things to be desired. The sense of taste, Ascetics, is aflame. It is a servant that gathers fuel.

“The heart, Ascetics, is aflame. As the chief of the servants from those who are under him receives their burdens and lays them all together for their master and his, so the heart receives the impressions which they bring. The heart, Ascetics, is a traitor. The heart is the king of those that bring impressions of things to be desired, for the heart weighs and considers what the rest have brought. The heart has his own crevice of perception, and from within this House of Nine Doors he looks abroad and himself brings impression of things to be desired.

The heart, Ascetics, is a servant that gathers fuel.

“So all these Six Passions, like servants that run together at the bidding of their lord, bring in their impressions, and the flame leaps higher. Inwardly that fire burns hotly, the fire of concupiscence and wrath and hatred and ignorance. The fire of dread of dying, of disease and helplessness and maiming! Within the robber, as he faces his king, burns the flame of terror, and within this House of Nine Doors as we face the end of life burns the flame of terror.

“Yet is there a way to quench this fire within us. As that fire which we see will be quenched when all has been burnt out, so this fire within us will be quenched when the fuel of desire has been burnt out utterly. Whence come miseries and hopeless longings, but from desire? That maid whom the young man sees, she can become the wife of but one, and for those who desire but win her not there is only this fire of passion and despair. It is the desire of life that makes us full of fears—of weakness that must come, of disease which our sins may send, and of death which will come to all.

“Follow then the Noble Fourfold Path. Along that Path the Six Passions go not bearing fuel!

The way is straight and can be seen! Its gate is cleansing of mind and its conclusion is peace and pity for all living beings! He that goes along it says no longer: 'I am I and this man is another, and therefore what he gains is lost to me.' No! But he says: 'For all things I the enlightened must feel love and pity, for all are bound in this chain of causation and rebirth. That chain I myself have broken, extinguishing desire within me, and for them also must I labour, that I may set them free!' Such an one needs not to follow laws and ritual, to cling to caste and his place among men! What is this, foolish ones, that you hold to—as a monkey holds to the fruit which he has clutched, though it is deep within the narrow-necked vessel? That fruit which he will not let drop will be his destruction when the farmer comes with his bludgeon! Thou sayest: 'I am a brahmin' or 'I am of warrior caste, and this man should be my servant.' Thou dost not consider that all alike are men, and that the same death must come to all!

"Damp down within you the fire of passion with the rainfall of equal perception of all that has life. Quench this devouring flame of lust and longing by extinguishing desire. Enter the Stream, and that flame will be put out! Pluck

out desire, as a poison plant is plucked out by the farmer, that he may plant good seeds. Pluck it from your heart, Ascetics, and the fire will surely die!

“All things, Ascetics, are aflame.”

Then those ascetics, gazing at the forest in the grip of torment—as a deer is caught in the folds of a python—said: “All things are aflame. We must pluck out the root of desire within us, that this fire may have no fuel!”

And with faces turned one way, as in a picture, their eyes were on that redness of fierceness, seen as a mist of blood overspreading all things. They saw an eagle high in the heavens, caught by the heat that stood upward like a pillar. One moment it hung, with wings that wavered; then it sped downward like a stone to its ruin. And they said within themselves: “The fire of lust is in manner exactly as this fire that we see. For it catches the mind, however high it soars, and drags it down with clutching hands that we see not! As the fire caught that eagle!” But the Lord gave them assurance, saying: “Tomorrow that fire must die. The Rains stand waiting behind the Vulture’s Peak, like handmaids with jars full of water, waiting for word to cast it on the earth. Come, Ascetics! and

quench the fire within you! The Season of Turning the Wheel in Secret is fully arrived!"



As they Turned the Wheel in Secret many sought out the Lord and spoke with him, whether his disciples were there or no. There was a woman who loved the Doctrine and had given the brethren a grove of fig-trees by running water among rocks. She came now weeping, for her daughter had died.

The Blessed One said to this woman, looking before him with eyes that stirred not and body unmoving: "Bring me, O Visakha, a grain of oil seed."

"I will surely bring it, Lord."

"Let it be from a house where no one has died that was dear to those within it. And with that seed shall this thy grief find healing, my sister."

So the woman, full of hope, said within herself: "The Lord can do all things—even as those ascetics of old time of whom we have heard that they compelled the Immortal Gods themselves to be their menial servants. I will find this

seed of oil-plant, and with it he will restore my child to life."

All that day and through the night she went from house to house, not ceasing for a moment, and next evening she came, weeping no longer, and bowed low before the Blessed One. "Lord, I understand. In all this world there is no house where I can find such a seed as thou hast asked for. I know now that I am bound in the one chain of suffering which binds all that breathe. Therefore no longer will I sorrow as I did when I came to thee and troubled thy meditation."

So she took the dust of the Lord's feet, and she Attained to Eat the Fruit of Entering the Stream.

There was also a man whose body was stricken with a vile disease. The Lord, with the Eye of Compassion beholding him, said: "Say to thyself, my brother: 'though a prisoner, I myself will release myself. There is no escape from this chain of suffering for all beings, and this is the way in which it has bound me. But though its prisoner I will walk the Noble Eightfold Path, and in pity for all that breathes and in forgetfulness of myself I myself will strike off these fetters of wailing.'"

This man also, gazing full at that Sun of Com-

passion, gained deliverance from despair, and he too Attained to Eat the Fruit of Entering the Stream.



Midway through Sravan came a break in the Rains. Then the Tathāgata, knowing the seasons and the ways of the heavens above, said to Panchkori: “Go, Ascetic, for there comes a dryness. Speak with thy people who have not seen thee these many days.”

So to the mud hut whence a herd-boy had gone forth returned an ascetic with shaven head and wearing the yellow robe.

As he descended the narrow ravine whose upper slopes led to the caves where the Lord had found him first—seeing the waters of the Kundalini that run softly—the forest trees burnished into emerald freshness by the rain—the monk’s heart thrilled with rapture. No waters had he found sweeter and brighter than Kundalini’s, not even those of Niranjala, where he had been caught in the strong meshes of *indra-jala*, net of the senses—that net from which it

had needed death to deliver him! Not his own but the death of the child who had lived with him in the wilderness! Remembering those waters, and remembering that life beside his own life, he caught his breath and laid his hand upon his heart, to still the fierceness of his suffering. Ahai! that the net of *indrajala* should so enfold us! That even after it has been pierced and the spirit sent freed on its path, still it should have strength to pluck us back! "O God!" cried this ascetic, forgetting that his own hands must hew out a way of deliverance through the thickets of delusion, "break these bonds that hold me fast! That so I may walk the Noble Eightfold Path which the Lord has shown me!"

It was the hour before the night's coming, and like a blanket below the knees, between him and the earth hung the mists of uprodden dust. In his misery he sat on a rock to rest, and in the track saw, lying together, five cowries, his name cast out as reminder of his nothingness.

He remembered now. This way led to the burning-ghat, on the wide saucer of sand where Kundalini poured its waters, entering the plain. He saw a group bearing a bier to a pyre. A man walking with downcast eyes threw from time to time into the air a cowrie or a handful of cow-

ries. Panchkori knew the dead body must be some neighbour whom he had known.

The mourners were poor mean folk, whose grief could trouble no one but themselves, and themselves for the day of death and burning only. The pyre was scant and meagre; the vultures on the *shiegun* tree beyond the sands knew that it was worth waiting till its work was finished.

As the monk came up Satkori his cousin started. "It is Panchkori!"

All stood silent as the yellow-robed ascetic came face to face with an old man at the body's head. In the old man's wide-open unseeing eyes was the blindness of a river bed in mid-winter, when the stream has sunk and there is only the endless-stretching sand and the emptiness of unglimmering channel. They touched the old man, and told him: "It is thy son Panchkori."

The old man felt the ascetic with his trembling hands. "It is my son Panchkori!"

The neighbours said: "His thread of fate" (hidden in the ways of this world it guides us, leading us though we know it not!) "has brought him to the bier of her who bore him. He is here to release her spirit, as a son should."

So the saffron-robed ascetic broke the skull,

that the spirit might be freed and the fire find a way to the brain. Seven times encircling the pyre he invoked the seven-bodied deity, and he set the sticks alight. The seven-bodied deity accepted the sacrifice, and leaping up devoured the cotton seeds and ghee poured on the wood, and hid the shrivelled body in his arms of brightness. He turned into dust the limbs of Bami (the left-handed), which had borne the limbs of Panchkori the monk.

All things are sorrow and passing, Ascetics. The waters of Kundalini that flow softly, fleeing away by the path which they have made for themselves through mountains and sand: the mist which the sun sucks up from the rains which Maghavan the bounteous has flung down: the white days: and the nights when serpents glide: all these pass and are passing. All things are transient, Ascetics.

Only the Noble Eightfold Path remains—as in a forest full of thorns and creepers remains a road which a king has commanded shall be kept free for his armies. The Noble Eightfold Path remains, and he that walks it to the end, that man finds salvation!

“**W**hence came my father blind?” asked Panchkori, as they led him home.

“By the will of God and his own sins of a former birth,” they answered. “It came not at once, but by slow increase and darkening. Thy mother fell ill and weak—they were both old, as thou knowest: fifty years have passed over thy father’s head and forty years he has laboured in the fields. Thy mother being old and full of sickness could not see to his comfort as she should, and so by neglect (it was the will of God and his own sins) he became blind.”

“By the will of God and my own sins”, said the old man, “I became blind.”

“By the will of God and my own sins”, said the monk, “I was blind when the Lord saved me from death and hell. I was blind” (to himself he said—and hearing the word of remembrance the Dweller in the Innermost wailed within him—as a man who sees his house in flames, and the night closing round his helplessness, wails in his anguish) “when beside the Niranjala I forgot the Noble Eightfold Path and fled from the face of my own evil doings. Now

let some deliverer put strength within me, that I fall not again into the net of delusion! For in my heart is pain and agony of crying, for this old man who was my father.”

Then he remembered the Tathāgata, how he had stood before Yasodhara, who was so full of sweetness and lowly perfection of loving—and had seen Rahula his only son—yet had gone back to the Noble Eightfold Path. As a lion which has come close to the city and gazed upon the ways of men, their comings and goings, and has returned majestic to his rocks and forest, so had that lion-heart returned from Yasodhara the Princess and Suddhodana the King his father!

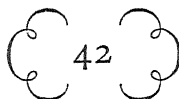
And to himself Panchkori said: “I am wearing *munja*-grass, and from this strife there must be no fleeing. The Lord was full of pity (for he knew!) when he sent me forth to break my mother’s skull and to see this sorrow face to face. Let me remember the truths which my teachers have shown.”

So to Rakhal his father he said: “All things are sorrow. Birth is sorrow, life is sorrow, the labour of daily rice is sorrow. The sun in its heat, the winter in its cold, the rains which fill our limbs with cramp and sickness, all these

are sorrow. And death is sorrow, setting a fence between the living and those who are gone, a fence wherethrough no man has seen."

Rakhal his father said: "All things are sorrow."

The neighbours also said: "All things are sorrow. We have seen it, and it is true! It is hard for us poor folk, toiling in sun and tempest while the rich and lordly ride at ease or remain in their stone-built houses. For all that we do our thread of fate allots us a handful of rice and green weeds, and our bellies are full of wind and emptiness. All things are sorrow. And death is the sorrow that sends us forth to sorrow afresh—sorrow whose face we know not! Ahai! it is sorrow which has been spun by our foolish deeds done unthinkingly!"



So that ascetic expounded the Noble Fourfold Truth, and opened to their vision clearly the Noble Eightfold Path. He explained also the Turning of the Wheel of the Doctrine.

The Noble Eightfold Path. The Path of Right

Thinking. Think not within yourselves: "I am I and my grief and suffering are great things, and this man is another and his grief and suffering are of small account!" He told them of how the Sakyas and Koliyas would have come to blows and have slain each other for the drawing of the water which was life for them all.

And they said: "Those men were foolish. *Chi! chi!* to seek to kill and maim each other, when there was water for all, as the Tathāgata showed!"

Right Planning. If a man seeks to gather rice at time of harvest, will he sow grass seeds? Or set his plants in the dryness of the high uplifted rocks?

Right Speaking. It was by evil words that those foolish ones were led step by step to the place where they were ready for blood-shedding. Right Speaking is a way of rest and quietness.

Right Action. So shall our good deeds await us when we leave this life—as on the farther bank of a raging stream neighbours who lean with hand outstretched to pluck us from danger.

Right Livelihood. And they said: "We have no way of livelihood but that which fate has allotted us." But he said: "Take no life for your pleasure, remember that all things that live are

bound in the chains of suffering with ourselves. That is the way of Right Livelihood, to be full of mercy to all." They said: "This way of Right Livelihood will we strive to follow, for it is a good way."

Right Effort. Not in winter does the farmer plough his fields, nor in the summer heats transplant his tender rice.

Right Frame of Mind. "Let your mind be full of peace, and remember all things that breathe are in the bonds of death and suffering. Say then to all this word: 'As my mind is free from hatred and desire to hurt thee, may thy day pass in peace, my brother and my sister!' For the beast and bird, which we imagine silent, have voices which are heard in the eternities!"

Right Rapture. "As the day closes in the evening hour when the sun sleeps on the surface of the world, so shall the Noble Eightfold Path bring thee to thine own evening hour."

Yet who, at the hour of setting forth on a long journey, can behold the inn where at end of his weariness he shall find rest and rejoicing? And who could enkindle the torch of Right Rapture in the heart of this ascetic, as he thought of the worn-out shell which the funeral fire had

wasted away, and saw his father helpless and shrunken and blinded? Not yet could that way of Right Rapture be trodden, save with feet that stumbled and eyes that were dim with tears!



That night he slept in his father's hut, and next morning, before the kokils cried, he went and stood in the manner of the brethren, silent and with begging-bowl extended, before the stone-built mansion of Bibhuti the brahmin, whose house wide fields encircled.

They told Bibhuti the brahmin: "That ascetic who was a herd-boy whom Siddhartha the King's son found in robber's bonds has returned and stands begging before thy gate."

The brahmin came and asked Panchkori: "What shall I do, for my mind is full of misery? By my good deeds in a former birth was I born a brahmin and full of wealth in this one. Yet how is this?" And he held forth his arm, on which was the mark of leprosy.

"Say to thyself," answered Panchkori. "This

sorrow which is in my flesh has come to others also, and each to himself said, even as I have said, I am I and my grief is too great to be borne. Yet has each one died, each in his season—as the plant dies when its fruit is gathered and its root is ripe for rotting. If this comes to all, it must come to me, and if it comes to all it can be no such great matter as I think it. Let me show pity, and my own sorrow will be something I can bear. For all things are sorrow: in each is the seed of weakness and dying: to each in his hour will come anguish, watch though we may—there is no warder who can drive away that spoiler!”

And he expounded the Noble Fourfold Truth. The Noble Truth of Pain: of the Cause of Pain: of Cessation of Pain: of the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the Cessation of Pain. And he said: “As from my taking refuge in the Buddha I have never wittingly taken its life from any living being——”

He halted, as a deer heart-struck by an arrow trembles and stops. He remembered the slain things of the forest by Niranjala. Yet he continued, for this man in wretchedness must he help by an Act of Truth. “As from my return to my refuge in the Lord I have never wittingly

taken its life from any living being, nor done it hurt, by this truth, my brother, mayest thou obtain peace!"

Hearing these words, and gazing on the ascetic's face, the brahmin Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream.

He looked at the young face before him, and he thought: "Mighty is this Doctrine, which to a herd-boy can bring redemption! For in his eyes shines the attainment of arahatship, though he is but a herd-boy and yesterday was but a child!" Aloud he said: "What wilt thou do now, Ascetic?"

"I return to the Tathāgata," answered the monk.

"May I reward thee? For thou hast spoken to me words of peace and healing."

"I have need of nothing, brahmin."

"Yet let me also perform an Act of Truth, that this river of peace may flow through all beings."

"Give then of thy abundance to those who have no rice and who in the chill nights of winter shiver and are full of pain."

"I will do as the Lord's Ascetic has commanded. Assuredly I will do it! Yet would I make some gift for thee, young Ascetic."

Panchkori hesitated, and listened for a voice within him. It came, low as the noontide's whisper, but its words were clear. "There is no sin, Ascetic, in the thought that shakes thee. Therefore give it utterance freely."

So Panchkori said: "There is an old man whose wife has died. He is blind and can work no longer, and his neighbours are poor. Send him daily a handful of rice at morning, and another at nightfall."

"Is it thy father, Ascetic?" asked the brahmin.

"It is my father," replied Panchkori.

"Be sure that I shall send it. And say to the Blessed One: 'In such and such a place I spoke to a brahmin upon whom death had set his seal, as on an ox or horse we set our brand, and that brahmin takes refuge in thee, in the Doctrine, in the Assembly. Come then quickly, before death has slain him, or his eyes have rotted that he cannot see thee, and tell him further of the Noble Fourfold Truth.'"

"I will tell the Tathāgata, and he will send out words of blessing. They shall reach thee, though all the rivers of the land should flow between thee and him! Meanwhile, abide in this village and Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine."

Panchkori bade his father also farewell, and returned to the Tathāgata.



When he rose for his last day of journeying, the Dweller in the Innermost spoke to him. "I have a word for thee."

That ascetic, halting in the way, answered: "Say it while my mind is fresh from sleep and before the day's cares cast their mist upon its mirror."

"Beyond those fields dwells the brahmin whose foot bled beneath thy knife when the harmless serpent had touched it."

Trembling took hold of that ascetic's limbs. Scarce could he continue, and he sat down to consider this word that had been put before him.

Not five *koss* distant rose the Vulture's Peak. Clouds hung about it, and its garment of forest loomed dark with the new leaves of the season's rain. There were the brethren, each one in his place, Turning the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine. And before them, like the sun which rises

daily, was the Lion of the Sakya lineage. Day after day that Sun arose and shone before them! "There are the groves wherein my soul exults!"

Ahai, not there was this ascetic's place! He that has fled from the battle, may he unblamed thrust himself again into the ranks of those that are brave?

He said to himself: "My evil deed, from whose blows I faltered, a craven when the drums of victory were about to sound, that evil deed awaits me once more! Like a tiger he lies in the thicket and I must walk through that forest—unfearingly!"

Yet the Lord himself had said: "This ascetic is but a child in the Way, and I his father wrought ill-advisedly, sending out such to a trial beyond his strength." The Tathāgata himself had received back this disciple, and that old sin need trouble him no more. When one has climbed from the river's mouth, sore distressed, do we say: "Return to thy peril and show thyself one that not even the raging floods can drown?"

As when a beam trembles, and its balance inclines neither this way nor that, so this ascetic's mind trembled as he sat there, on a rock beneath a tree.

As when one shakes the scales and one side

goes down swiftly, so now his mind was shaken. As when a whisper blows up from the dry ground, and a seed that is floating is blown apart, so now a whisper blew up from the silence of his spirit. "*Chi! chi!* where is thy valour? They that walk with lions should themselves be lions!"

From his seat he rose at last. "I will put on *munja*-grass, and from this conflict I will not return a craven!" Across the fields he made his way, to the brahmin's house.

"I have myself been a teacher. That other brahmin's hand I took, and guided him to Entering of the Stream. He abides in his village, Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine. A leper, he has chosen the Noble Eightfold Path, though his feet must stumble. How then shall I, who have been an instructor, return to the Blessed One with my own mind uninstructed and full of fear?"

He entered the courtyard. The brahmin's wife was there, husking rice. Her eyes filled with hate as she saw a man with shaven head and saffron robes come up.

"Idlers and worthless, never will you cease from troubling those who eat bread in the sweat of their brows? My husband, that fool, have you

sent wasting his substance on beggars and such. At the end we shall surely starve, and I a brahmin's wife go stripped of my jewels, as though I were a widow or some ordinary woman!"

"Mother!" said the ascetic. "I have returned to serve thee."

If they were large with anger before, now her eyes all but started from her head. "What! That burnt-face! That thieving rascal! That rogue and utterly base-born imposter—no monk but a slayer of kine and wounder of brahmins! Hast *thou* returned to the house that loathes thee?" In her madness of fury she struck him with the pestle. His face broke, and the blood streamed down.

As when a grove in the time of mango-flowering is struck, from its boughs abroad flows a fragrance beyond the power of words to praise, so in Panchkori's spirit came sweetness unutterable. "The Lord can accept again his disciple, and this my evil deed must fly from before me! I have saved my soul from hell and my service from shame!"

"Strike, mother!" he said; and stood with hands drawn down at his sides.

"*I will strike!*" said the woman in wildness of wickedness. "That is for the blood which thy

knife drew from my husband, fool that he was!
And that is for the hate which I his wife bear
towards thee!"

The iron-topped pestle did its work, and the
light of an eye went out. Panchkori became
Kana, the half-blind ascetic. He was as Eklochon
the Robber. Their thread of fate had brought
them both to the same place.



Through darkness and a showery mist Panchkori stumbled into the Hut of Assembly, sat down in the dimness of a corner, and listened.

"All things are sorrow, Ascetics. What is the root of sorrow?"

"Desire is the root of sorrow," answered those ascetics.

"Desire is truly the root of sorrow. Desire is like flaming straw. It gives not heat, it is bright for but a space in which one may cry: 'See!' Then is there only burnt-out dust where brightness shone! If Ananda here, who lights the lamp for our evening meditation, were to fling down

burning straw, would that, Ascetics, give light in this darkened room?"

"By no means. It would set in flames this Hut of Assembly, and walls and roof would be destroyed!"

"Even so, Ascetics, when the straw of desire is kindled and set aflame, this House of Nine Doors in which we dwell for a season is set aflame. Desire is like sparkling liquor, goodly to hold in the hand, but poison to the body. He that has drunk well of wine, that man totters on his road. He sees the things that are not, and over the things that are his feet are caught and fall. So is a man that is intoxicated with desire. He thinks: 'This world is one of exceeding sweetness.' The air is aflame! The earth is aflame! All things in his eyes are full of brightness! He sees not that all things fade and pass, and that desire brings only burning and gnawing of heart, when the things desired have lost their freshness.

"As the wheel of the cart follows the foot of the ox that draws it, so satiety follows the intoxication of desire.

"As that same ox struggles and with pain gets forward, when its feet are entangled in the deepness of mire, so in the mud of desire our feet

are held fast and we move not forward save with toil and panting of breath.

“From desire come anger and envy. The man filled with desire says: ‘These others, though they deserve no more than I, have a goodly lot, and to me God has been surly and unfriendly.’ So he hates these others, for they have the things that he desires. And if a man speak out of thoughts that are evil, or if he acts from a heart that is evil, then—as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the cart—pain follows that man. As our shadow follows the body, so pain follows the evil-doer and evil-speaker.

“The evil-doer, the evil-speaker, the evil-thinker mourn in this world and in the next.

“As the wind throws down a rotten tree, Mara the Evil One will throw down the pleasure-seeking man. As the wind blusters against a mountain—and it stands!—so Mara the Evil One puffs out his cheeks and blows vainly against the man whose mind is freed, and that man may not be overthrown.

“In the world men speak of caste and clan, by many names. This man is a brahmin, and that other a warrior! Others are to be despised as those who serve! They are merchants or toilers or, it may be, merely those who cleanse the

streets and bear away the filth! But that man, Ascetics, is the true brahmin who offers no sacrifices but that of the Six Passions—whose mind is firm on the doctrine, whose feet seek no temple but are set on the Noble Eightfold Path. That, O Ascetics, is the true brahmin!

“Who then is brave? Who is the true warrior? It is not he who sallies forth with sword and spear—and breastplate to keep him safe—and arrows to slay his foes at a distance. It is the man who can face the fear within his own mind, and can say: ‘I am not a child, that I should be afraid of dark rooms, or of even that darkest room of all, my own trembling heart.’ It is the man who says: ‘This and this evil deed have I done; and now, while my terror is great upon me, I will confront it and endure all it can do of wrath upon me.’ And that man, Ascetics, is bravest of all, who has fled from the battle—for all may flee, when the passion of shrinking takes hold of limb and brain—yet afterwards returns. Yes, though the burning of fear is fierce within him, returns, for his will drives him, as the rider drives on a horse that is mad with its fear—yes, as such a rider can drive his beast through a jungle full of the smell of tigers or through a fire across his pathway

when the wilderness is beginning to blaze and crackle! That man, Ascetics, I count the true warrior.

“There is one here, Ascetics, a herd-boy concerning whom some of you have said: ‘Ahai! he was weak and Mara possessed him for a season! Yet to-day, when he returns from battle, not for his foeman are the drums of conquest sounding! Let the Assembly rise and witness: ‘This Doctrine is truly Excellent, for it makes brahmins and warriors of those whom the world counts base. Because of it we speak no longer of brahmins and warriors—and of castes that are low and mean!’ ”

Then that Assembly rose and bore witness: “This Doctrine is truly Excellent! It shall overspread all lands.”

And to Panchkori the Lord said: “Evil has befallen thee, Disciple, yet has not evil touched thy spirit! Evil, when done against those that deserve it not, falls back upon the doer, as dust thrown up against the wind. I sent forth a child, and a warrior has returned to me. I have lost a herd-boy, and gained a brahmin.”

As by turning of a handle a wheel goes round, so by the turning of night after day and day after night our life fulfils its circle, and our years come to an end.

So the years of the Tathāgata's life among men began to fulfil their circle.

Evil befell the Order, and in this way.

The lady Pajapati, the Lord's kinswoman, came from the country of the Sakyas, and said: "Let the Blessed One admit me to his disciples."

Thrice she made this request, waiting in the way when he went abroad, and thrice he made no answer but passed her by.

There came others from his kinsfolk, and last of all came Yasodhara also (though she said: "I will not come into the Lord's presence. I will wait here till you bring his answer.") They came in the heats of summer, their heads shaven and on their bodies the yellow robes of the Order; and their feet were swollen from the long journey, and their limbs covered with dust. Their eyes were red with weeping when again the Lord refused them thrice.

Then Yasodhara sought out Ananda, and

stood before him silent, holding out her beggar's bowl. And Ananda was troubled, seeing the Lord's wife, the daughter of a king, standing before him in sorrow of heart and weeping.

He thought: "They have done wrong, for they are women, in taking upon them the robes of the Order when no man has given them permission. But it is useless to blame the wind when it wanders, or women when they choose their own path."

He thought also: "These women have shown great strength of desire, they have borne the rigours of the way. And Yasodhara is a king's daughter, she is not to be blamed, she desires to follow the path her lord has opened."

To the Blessed One Ananda said: "Is a woman, Lord, who has gone forth from her home to the homeless life capable of Entering the Stream? May she attain to salvation?"

"She may attain to it. A woman is capable, Ananda."

"Lord, these women thy kinsfolk have entered the homeless life. And Yasodhara has neither son nor husband, for her son is with thee. Lord, her love has been great, and to me, who am but a learner, it seems that a jewel is worthy of a jeweller to cut it and show forth its bright-

ness. Let not this jewel, Lord, be cast in the dust!"

The Lord making no answer, Ananda said: "Were it not good if women were permitted to join the Order?"

"It were not good, Ananda."

"Women", said Dhammasenapati, "are as crocodiles in the stream of existence. They wait for the foolish who bathe in the waters of desire and passion. Under the waves they pull the unwary and unwatchful, and in those waves men are drowned."

"Nevertheless," said Ananda, "these women have proved that they carry in their hearts the lamp of earnestness. Let the Blessed One decide if the lamp of fitness shines there also."

The Blessed One said: "If they will take upon themselves the Eight Stringent Rules——"

"They will take them, Lord."

"Ananda", said Moggallana, "has been talking with them overmuch."

"Then", the Lord concluded, "let this vow be their ordination."

So women entered the Order.

When Ananda returned from taking the Lord's consent to those women his kinsfolk, the Lord said in great sadness: "Ananda, if women had not received this leave to go forth in the doctrine and to bear its discipline, then the Excellent Doctrine would have remained for a thousand years. But now, Ananda, it cannot stay! Within five hundred years it will be overthrown. As a house where there are many women and few men is easily broken into, and its wealth removed by thieves, so the religious Order which women have entered will be broken into by Mara. As a field of rice when rust settles on the ears is fit only for cattle to feed on, so, Ananda, this Order has now rust on its growth and must perish. And as a man who makes a place for the holding of waters builds its dyke strongly, so that in the floods it may not be shattered, so, Ananda, foreseeing this request of thine, have I made ready the Eight Stringent Rules. As a house whose walls are weak requires strong pillars to support its roof, so this ordination of women requires the Eight

Stringent Rules to uphold it, not to be transgressed while life continues!”

“Yet”, said Ananda, “the ascetic, go where he will, must meet with women, whether in the Order or in the world. How shall the disciple act towards such?”

“See them not, Ananda.”

“But if I see them—as sometimes there is no escape.”

“Speak not to them.”

“But if they speak to me, Lord—as these who stood before me now, some silent but others saying: ‘Ananda, speak for us to the Blessed One’?”

“Then be awake, Ananda! Be awake and watchful!”



Going forward from Vesali, the careless and sinful city, they came to the mango-grove of Ambapali the courtesan. Hearing that the Lord was resting here, from the city she came in her chariot.

The Lord saw the dust of the lady's chariot

approaching. In it sat Ambapali, the Mango Girl, whose grove they were in; and with her was a train of horsemen and footmen, and other chariots also, for she was the King's mistress and noble young men also sought her favour. At the grove's entrance she stayed (for there was no road for the horses); she alighted and came in, her followers and servants with her. The Lord meanwhile preached the Discourse of Watchful Action.

"Remember, as by one member shame comes upon a family, so by one monk shame comes upon the Assembly.

"Let a monk be watchful; this is my word to you.

"Let a monk so think of his body that he may overcome the grief which springs from its cravings, driving these down—as a man drives down his cows when the hour has come to bring them from the mountain. While we live in this House of Nine Doors—it is but for a season!—we are subject to its cravings, we are subject to sensations. The eye sees, the ear hears, our limbs feel pain and delight. But let not the mind be their servant! Subject to sensations, so regard them (Ascetics!), that, being earnest, watchful, full of exceeding carefulness, we may

overcome the sorrow that springs from the craving which follows sensation. Let the mind be the master, and let that master overcome the sorrow which springs from imagination or from the body's sensation.

“And in this way, Ascetics, does a monk become earnest, watchful, full of exceeding carefulness. Do everything with utter wakefulness and presence of mind (for mind must be the master). Going forth and coming in, gazing and watching, bending the arm or extending the arm, wearing the yellow robe or bearing the bowl of begging, eating, drinking, tasting, walking, standing, sitting, asleep or awake, talking or in silence, in everything you do let the mind be the master, let the mind be watchful.

“Thus, Ascetics, let a monk be earnest, watchful, full of exceeding carefulness. This is my instruction.”



The Mango Girl (for so they styled her, mocking her, since her father had been a seller of fruit from door to door), bowing low

addressed the Lord, and said: "Will the Blessed One with his disciples dine at my house to-morrow?"

By silence he gave consent; and Ambapali, gladdened, arose and went to her house, keeping the Blessed One on her right hand as she passed from his presence.

As her chariot (and the chariots and horses of her followers and servants) drove madly on the high road, they came up against the chariots of the Licchavi nobles, who were coming to hear the Blessed One. Axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke, the chariot of Ambapali the courtesan drove up against the Licchavi chariots, and neither could proceed for a space of time. "What is this, Ambapali," said the Licchavis, "that thou drivest thus on the King's highway?"

"Lords, the Blessed One and his disciples will dine at my house to-morrow, and I hasten to make all ready."

"Ambapali," besought the Licchavis, "surrender this meal to us, and we will pay thee whatever sum thou namest!"

But she, exalted, answered: "Not for all this land of Vesali and the lands which serve it and bring it tribute, would I surrender a feast so full of honour!"

“Ahai! this Mango Girl has forestalled us!”
Crying thus, the Licchavis went on to the grove.

Seeing them coming, fair young men driving and riding noble horses, the Blessed One remembered the days of his own youth, when the mist and brightness of Maya enwrapt him, and he said: “Look, Ascetics! As when the Three and Thirty Gods who are above all other Gods ride abroad in their splendour, so now a sight approaches!”

The Licchavis alighted from their steeds and chariots and came through the grove, fair young men carrying each his weapon. They addressed the Blessed One, and entreated him: “Dine with us, and bring thy monks, to-morrow.”

“Licchavis, we have promised to dine at the house of Ambapali,” said the Blessed One.

“Ambapali the courtesan? Ambapali the Mango Girl?”

“Even so.”

“Ahai! this Mango Girl has forestalled us!”
Crying thus, the young men went their way.

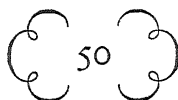
At the time appointed Ambapali the courtesan, having prepared sweet cakes and fruit and rice, herself came to the grove and bowing low told the Lord: “Lord, the feast is ready.”

So the Lord and his disciples went to her house and took their seats, and she herself waited upon them and fed them. When the meal was over, the Lord said: "Ambapali, say what is in thy mind."

"Lord, has such an one as I the power to perform an Act of Truth?"

"Daughter, thou hast the power."

Ambapali, trembling, bowing low said: "That grove where the Blessed One is staying, and this house where the Blessed One has sat, I give them to the Lord and the Assembly, to be theirs for ever."



Then the Lord spoke the Discourse of Decay and Wasting.

"All things decay, Ascetics. Ambapali, that chariot of thine, in which thou camest yesterday to the grove, is it not new?"

"Lord, it was a king's gift," answered Ambapali, bowing her head for shame.

"Yet already—look but at its wheels, where rocks in the King's highway have dented it, and

at places where the ants have devoured its paint—that chariot shows marks of decay and wasting. Think you that a thousand years hence men will see it and will say: ‘This is the chariot which a King out of his great love gave to Ambapali the courtesan?’ Seek then for that which decay and wasting can touch not. This House of Nine Doors, Ascetics, is wasting away; hour by hour, and day by day, it is wasting. Adorn it as you will, set on it jewels and paint and many-coloured garments, yet will you not stay its wasting. Its outside may indeed be fair to look on, but within it is full of foulness and rotting—therefore must its Nine Doors be open day and night! Gild not and deck this House therefore, for it must decay. Toothless gums and haggard eyes are its consummation, and the funeral pyre its finish. In it we dwell for a season, and for a season it will serve, and we guard it and keep it from defilement. Had it been meant for eternity we should have been given a house far other.”

Then those ascetics said: “This House of Nine Doors is given us for a season. And for a season it will serve.”

When they had left the house of Ambapali the Mango Girl, Dhammasenapati and Mog-

gallana and Ananda told the Blessed One: "Lord, there is murmuring among the younger monks, and among the people also. They say: 'It was not seemly that the Tathāgata should reject the noble young men and take his meal at the house of a Mango Girl. Her body is a house that lies open to all who can pay the fee of entrance, and the grove which is now ours was given her by a lover.' "

The Lord answered: "If a King's son or one who is born rich and noble does what attains to a middle rank of excellence, what do men say?"

"They say," answered Ananda: " 'This work is exceeding wonderful, astonishing, beyond all praise! Who could have thought it lay within mortal power?' "

"And when one who is poor and mean and lowly, and has no friends, does what attains to the highest rank of excellence, what do men say?"

"They say," answered Moggallana: " 'Beyond doubt this work, though its outward show seems good, has in it some hidden defect that makes it worthless.' They say: 'Beyond doubt this man who is poor and mean and lowly and has no friends has seen one of the

noble ones do such a work, and he has tried to copy it.' They say: 'The more closely we look the more of fault we perceive. In fact, this work is exceeding bad, and it is dishonesty that has given it its outward seeming.' "

"And also," said Dhammasenapati, "only when such a man has done what attains the highest rank of excellence, not once but until the mind wearies to see it so often, only then will men say, grudgingly: 'We see now that this work is not so bad as we thought! Indeed, it is such as those that are noble do often and with ease, and it is good that God should let the base and mean and worthless once in an age of ages touch the knees of the truly great.' "

The Tathāgata was silent. Saying presently: "And if a man that has but one coin and is starving pays that coin for a handful of rice, is his sin beyond forgiveness?"

"What sin?" asked those disciples, astonished.

"Why, the sin of using his only coin, having afterwards no other left in his hand to pay to priests or brahmins or perchance to buy for himself raiment."

"But the man was starving and had but one coin! Were not those the Lord's words?"

"Tell me—for all know it—was this woman a king's daughter?"

"She was a mango girl. Her father was crippled and sold fruit. Her family were of no account. They were mean, and base, and poor."

"What possession had she, when she came to years of womanhood?"

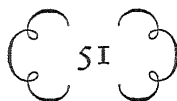
"Lord, she had beauty," said Ananda. "All men know it. She is the Moon of Vesali! The Moon of the fullness of Phalgun!"

"And with that coin she bought for her father and mother ease and food's sufficiency when they were aged and diseased! With that coin she has fed the poor and covered their limbs, remembering that she herself was not always a king's mistress or the desired of nobles. She has used that coin, for she had no other! There is no way, that I have ever heard of—and I was a king's son—whereby the poor and mean and base who are also women can break from their net of utter misery and penury."

"Yet her life is one of sin," said Dhammasenapati.

"For that," answered the Lord, "others will see to it. Above our sins sits judgement, weighing each act and thought, and the measure will not be short in the end, be sure of that. Within

this woman's mind shine the conditions of discipleship. As you yourselves, O Ascetics, might perchance have seen."



At this time many among the monks began to be disobedient, and to say: "The Blessed One grows old and he makes mistakes."

Nagasamala the monk, who was aged and obstinate, went with the Lord one day as his attendant. At a forking of the road, where one way ran down into thorns and rocks and the other continued straight and soft to the foot, Nagasamala said: "Lord, this is the way. We will go by it."

The Lord said: "That other is the way, Nagasamala. We must take it."

"That way is full of thorns and rocks. We must not go by it," answered Nagasamala, and three times refused the Lord's command. At the last, full of anger, he set the Lord's bowl and robe on the ground. "Lord, here are your bowl and robe." So saying, he went his way.

The Lord went down into the rocks and

thorns and at eventide he regained his *asram*, having Turned the Wheel of the Doctrine in many villages and hamlets.

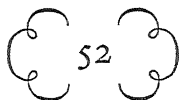
That evening, and the next day, Nagasamala appeared not. But as the next night was falling there came a monk, walking stiffly and with difficulty and full of dirt and dust. Robbers had fallen upon him, watching the good road where travellers went; and, wrathful that their prey should be a monk without money or fine raiment, they had beaten him and broken his bowl and torn his robe, so that he lay in a swoon till he recovered.

The Tathāgata said: "Disciple, you had better go out to-morrow and beg for yourself a new robe, since this by some mischance has become torn."

To the monks he said: "Let a man, Ascetics, eschew evil deeds and evil thoughts, as a merchant, if he is alone and has much merchandise, avoids a road where robbers are known to lurk—as a man who cares for his life avoids poison.

"The true monk avoids a place of many people. Like a rhinoceros, he wanders alone, he walks alone, he meditates alone. As a bather avoids a place where there are known to lie in wait

sharks and crocodiles, so he avoids the highway where many foolish and evil men are walking."



Devadatta the Lord's cousin grew weary of the Noble Eightfold Path. It is a path which must be trod afoot, it has no place for chariots and horses! Devadatta desired a path where a chariot might go, and he himself be in the midst in splendour!

He came to the Blessed One, and said: "This Order which you have established is good, but its rules are lax. I desire, sir, that we may live under the Five Stringent Rules."

"What Rules are those?" asked the Blessed One.

"These: that we should live all our lives in the forest and never in a city."

"Then shall we Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine where none but the wild beings of the forest, the birds and beasts and demons, can see it and learn themselves to turn it."

"That we live only on food which we have begged, and go not to feasts provided—as of late

the Lord took his monks to feast with a courtesan and in her house."

"That is a small matter to make such dust over—in a world where great matters are not few!"

"That we should wear rags only—rags which have been cast away—and not accept new robes that are offered us."

"Truly, Disciple, thou art a good dog to take out hunting! Other dogs track down deer and hares. But thou, more diligent, hast a nose for snails and lizards!"

"That we should live always under some tree, and not—as those whom the net of *indrajala* holds captive—sometimes in goodly houses, or in huts on the Vulture's Peak or the Bamboo-Grove or—that mango-grove which the courtesan has given thee."

"I do not choose that in the Rains my disciples should grow full of pains and fevers. I work with staves that are sound and firm, and not with rotting sticks."

"That if fish or flesh are offered to us as alms we refuse them."

"All these Five Stringent Rules", said the Tathāgata, "are permissible now, for the monk that would keep them. Saving only, that in the

Rainy Season I will not have my monks sleeping under trees."

Then Devadatta went among the ascetics saying: "The Blessed One has walked the Noble Eightfold Path for many years, but he grows old and he remembers that he was a king's son. His body yearns for ease and softness, and he is unable to keep the Five Stringent Rules. Ahai! can a king's son be an ascetic? Out of the slippery surface of silk can the roughness of canvas be made?"

Many of the younger monks repeated: "Can a king's son be an ascetic? Behold, we know that he should be King in the country of the Sakyas" (for Suddhodana his father had died) "and that the King who reigns says openly: 'I am Bharata and I reign but until Rama returns from exile.' One of these days the Lord will go back to be a king, and will he then be an ascetic? Will the crow that has sought out and found a lump of fat say: 'To-day is a fast-day and I must not eat?'"

Devadatta said openly therefore: "We must establish the Five Stringent Rules. Come, Ascetics, all who think as I do!"

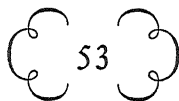
Five hundred monks, newly ordained, looking on Devadatta, said: "He has the eyes of a Buddha, and his speech and aspect are kingly

and severe." So they followed him to the Hill of Gayasisa, to hold the Assembly. Seated there in order, they said: "We take refuge in Devadatta. We take refuge in the Five Stringent Rules. We take refuge in this purged Assembly."

Ananda, troubled in spirit, said: "Lord, Devadatta has gathered a great Assembly."

"The plantain, Ananda, gathers a thick shower of purple blossom. Yet is it slain by this glory of flower and fruit with which it makes so proud a show! Go when all has ripened, and thou wilt see festering stem and rotted leaves! But the mango remains for many seasons, year following year giving fruit. Even so is an evil and ambitious man destroyed by men's praise. Devadatta will pass; this Doctrine will remain."

He said also: "This Doctrine is as the sea, which flows by all lands. Devadatta is as a man who thinks to impregnate the ocean with a cup of poison."



Nevertheless, when Sariputta said: "Sir, many of these whom Devadatta has drawn to him are young men and inexperi-

enced. Let therefore some of us have speech with them. It may be they will return," the Tathāgata answered: "Go then to these wanderers, Dhammasenapati—thou and Moggallana, who have walked so long together as comrades in the Way." So they went.

When Devadatta saw Moggallana the Discerner of Spirits and Dhammasenapati the Chief of Those Who Gave Instruction, he exulted (for pride had clouded his mind). "Behold, the Assembly splits asunder, as a nut when it is rotten! Here are those two first and greatest that remain of Gotama's disciples. They have seen that he is old and without zeal, and have come to join us." He called them up and gave them the seats of honour, before that wicked assembly on the mountain.

Then Devadatta in the presence of those five hundred, exalted beyond measure by the pride within him, turned the wheel of his evil doctrine. Hour after hour he talked in his foolishness, until in his hearers began to be stirrings of body and weariness of listening. Much he spoke of himself, and how that he was a king's close kinsman, and how that in the days when his spirit slept in the net of *indrajala* by his strength and valour he had achieved mighty deeds. Much

he spoke in scorn of the Blessed One, saying: "Gotama is old and his mind yearns towards softness. He would eat fish and sweet ripe mangoes, and feast on curds—as he did in sight of us all, at the house of Ambapali the mango girl."

Last of all, from exhaustion his voice faltered and grew thick, and he said: "Let Dhammasenapati and Moggallana now speak of the Five Stringent Rules and the new Assembly. For they have knowledge of Gotama for these thirty years and more, and have seen how luxury has grown upon him. It is for this cause that they his first disciples who are yet alive have left him and joined us. I myself must now rest. I have Turned the Wheel of the Doctrine without ceasing since the hour of cowdust, and night draws towards morning."

Devadatta therefore slept, as a foolish warrior when the foe is about to break his gates.

Dhammasenapati rose, and said only: "You have heard much blame of the Blessed One. It is true, he was a king's son and should now be king. But that fact he has forgotten, these forty years since first as a black-haired boy entering on man's estate he sought his home in the homeless. He is not as the one whom you have just heard,

who even now takes glory in the memory of the strength that was his while yet he lay a captive in *indrajala's* meshes. Think you that the Five Stringent Rules can uphold a man who staggers thus intoxicated with wine which he drank so long ago that only the fool would now remember it? When the feast is over the wise man whose head is still unmuddled goes his way. Only the drunkard gropes on the floor for the tinsel that has dropped from the dancing-girl's shoulders, and thinks he has found a jewel, clasping it as he falls asleep."

Moggallana then confronted those foolish ones. And as a herd of deer tremble in the moonlight at some water-hole, when through the blackness they see glaring the eyes of a lion that has the rage of famine in his spirit, so those unascetic ascetics shook in their grief of shame and sinfulness. The old man's visage was fierce, and his eyes were like stars, sharpened by the depth of sunken aged features in which they shone.

"Five and thirty years have I followed the Lord, the Blessed One. Step by step and deed by deed I have watched him and wondered. Truly in him has Mara the Evil One not so much part as an ant might cover! Much talk have we heard of the Five Stringent Rules! To my mind the

Five Stringent Rules are these: that a man should forget what he has been, that a man should have thought for others only, that a man should uphold the poor and helpless and consider the beggar as a brahmin, that a man should hold passion and pride in chains as a mad elephant is held in chains, that a man should forgive even the foolish and untruthful—as the Lord has forgiven this Devadatta who has spoken so much evil concerning him. If a man can keep those Five Stringent Rules, will he vex his mind with rules that bid him make his couch always beneath some tree or rock? Will the man that has conquered serpents stoop to war with lizards? As Dhammasenapati has said, O Followers of the Five Stringent Rules! You have watched a drunkard dancing, and now that drunkard has fallen asleep! As you yourselves will fall asleep in this intoxication of folly, not to awaken save in hell! Go then your ways, and we will go ours! Dhammasenapati and I have lived with a lion! And we choose not now, when death daily calls us, to make our home with jackals!”

So in the hour when the east was greying, Dhammasenapati and Moggallana returned. And those five hundred foolish ones, seeing the old men striding through the dimness and the

jungle—as those before whom fear has not dared to show its face these many years and longer!—felt, first one and then another, stirrings of remorse and shame. One by one they rose, and silently followed, till when Dhammasenapati and Moggallana rejoined the Blessed One, behind them walked a full assembly.

“Let there be a law”, then said Dhammasenapati, “that any monk who has left the Lord must again take the vows and be reordained. Let these five hundred foolish ones be the first.”

“Let the matter rest rather,” replied the Tathāgata. “Good Dhammasenapati, it is sufficient that they have seen their fault, and that each by returning has made confession. That they are here is atonement enough.”

And Devadatta, when it was full day, awakening and rubbing his eyes, cried out aloud (while sleep was still a net over his limbs and mind): “These are the Five Stringent Rules, Ascetics, which Gotama the king’s son has not strength to keep! These are——”

He sat erect, and rubbing his eyes clean gazed before him. There was no single monk there. So he sprang up, and said: “I shall surely find them asleep, each one under some rock or tree.”

But in all that mountain there was not one

monk. His great assembly, like a cloud it had melted away before the Sun of the Sakya lineage!

And from Devadatta's mouth blood poured out, from the anguish of shame that struck him. He returned not to the brethren, but made his way to the court of King Bimbisara.



They told the Blessed One: "Devadatta has gone to the court of King Bimbisara, and there he spreads lies against the Lord and his doctrine. He talks much with Ajatasattu, the King's son—an evil-hearted man, friend and upholder of all that is vile and base."

The Tathāgata answered: "The tree whose growth has begun must wax tall till it reach fulfilment. Devadatta must become yet more Devadatta, himself fulfilling himself. As by the drip-drip-drip of water-drops a pot is filled to the brim, so a fool becomes full of folly and evil, even though he gathers it little by little."

"Yet will not that wicked one," asked Eklochon, "seeing that he has sat with us and has

learnt the words of the Blessed One, in the night-time when the voice within us speaks and is heard remember the Excellent Doctrine and be ashamed? Will he not remember hell and the torments of hell hereafter, and cry out—while the sweat pours from his forehead, as the Lord remembers it poured from mine when the Blessed One sought me in that cave by Kunda-lini!—‘Ahai! I now remember the words my Teacher gave me!’ ”

“It may be that Devadatta will—*remember*,” said the Blessed One.

“If a man remembers good words, can such an one continue in wrongdoing?” persisted Eklochon.

The Lord, looking on Eklochon, saw within his simplicity the light of Nirvana shining as a lamp within a jar. He smiled, and answered (the smile dying out in sadness of spirit): “The man devoid of thought, Eklochon, even though he knows and can recite a large portion of the Vedas, if he is not a doer of the doctrine is but as a cow-herd who counts the cows of others but has none of his own.”

Then the Lord preached the Discourse of the Cessation of Hatred.

“Fire meeting fire is slain by fire, Ascetics. Yet

is not hatred slain by hatred. No! Hatred meeting hatred is as the rushing together of oil and flame! Fierceness arises, heat arises, blackness and stench arise! Hatred does not cease by meeting hatred, but by meeting love and kindness.

“He spoke to me vile words, he struck me, he put me to shame and overcame me, he robbed me—in those who cherish such thoughts hatred cannot cease.

“He spoke to me vile words, he struck me, he put me to shame and overcame me, he robbed me—in those who forget such thoughts hatred dies, as a fire dies when we pull out the fuel on which it feeds.

“When, since the world began, did hatred cease by hatred?

“I have told you before, Ascetics, the evil-doer suffers in all worlds, in this world and in the next. When he thinks of the evil he has done, his mind is clouded, as a stream is clouded when its mud is stirred. The man who thinks without hatred, and who acts or speaks with a pure thought, delight follows him, a shadow that does not leave its substance.

“I have told you of the Noble Eightfold Path. Its end and completion is Right Rapture, that exaltation of spirit which the mind knows when

it comes to the end of the body's journey. Before it lies the world to which it is going, like a field in calm sunlight when the day is setting. There on those green levels await us the deeds we have done, the words we have spoken, the thoughts we have harboured! Let them not be demons, Ascetics, that seek to tear the soul in pieces!

"Put away hatred therefore. He reviled thee, he spoke evil words behind thy back, he struck thee. What of that? Thy reputation is but a wind! it is but a shadow! can a man hurt such as these? Few know thy name, and the days hasten on when none will remember that such an one ever walked these earthly ways. As for thy body, which perchance this enemy struck, producing the illusion of pain, whereby in the mind (as from a flint, by striking, flame is kindled) the fire of anger and hatred arose, that body soon will lie on the ground as a log, without life and utterly useless. Wilt thou vex thyself for sorrow that befalls a log?

"Let hatred be put out by love, as a fire is put out by the gentle softness of water. This is my word to you, Ascetics."

Eklochon, his mind ablaze with the Doctrine, asked the Blessed One: "Lord, I have walked

with thee these twenty years, and at thy command I have been through many villages of the land of Magadha, Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine before the people. There was a time when seeing me they cried: 'There comes Eklochon, that wicked and terrible robber!' and they stoned and struck me and tried to slay me. But now all men know that I am as a wild beast which the Lord has tamed and set in chains that can never be broken, and even the little children greet me by name. With this hand that has killed men I have mended their kites, and it is well known that they have this verse for my coming:

*Robber! Robber! Mend my kite!
Fledge my arrow for its flight!*

"Has the Lord forgotten my life in the days before he saved me?"

"I have not forgotten, Disciple."

"Yet the fear is on me still that those deeds of wrath and cruelty are seeking their doer, to drag my steps to hell! When I hear soft words and women and children bring rice to my bowl, I remember, Lord! and I know that *this* is not the shadow of punishment that must follow on such a life as mine! I must go out and seek those

evil deeds"—the robber's face worked with pain and desire—"that I may confront them to the uttermost before death comes (as come he soon must!) to claim this spirit that loves thee!"

Gazing on that old man, the Lord's heart filled with compassion. "Say what is in thy mind, Disciple."

"This is in my mind, that in the land to southward dwell a people savage and without mercy—man-slayers and eaters of flesh. They have never heard of the Noble Fourfold Truth! They know not that by hatred hatred will not cease, but that by pity for all that breathes the world shall be drawn to salvation. Let me therefore—for my years draw to an end—go to Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine in sight of these men!"

The Lord, looking upon him with kindness, said: "Hast thou not heard how cruel and full of wrath and violence are these men?"

"I have heard it, Lord. In the night-time, in the hero-seat of meditation, I have said to myself: 'From such men shall I attain perfection!' I go to them as to my last battle, and those my vile deeds of old time I shall strike down before I myself am struck down by death!"

"When they hear thee and are full of fury at

the Doctrine, and curse thee and abuse thee and call thee such names as are not to be repeated, what wilt thou think, Eklochon?"

"I shall think: 'These are men in whom is the cream of kindness and gentleness, as in a coconut is its sweet milk! For they speak only words of insult, they do not strike me with their hands or fling at me stones, such as my deeds have merited.' "

"What if they shall then strike thee with their hands or fling at thee stones?"

"I shall think: 'These men are kind and friendly! They do not strike me with clubs or swords.' "

"If they strike thee with clubs and swords?"

"I shall think: 'At least they do not kill me.' "

"And if they kill thee?"

"Then that will be the greatest kindness of all, and I shall think: 'These men are my well-wishers, for with so little pain they set free Eklochon the Robber from this hateful body in which he did so many and so evil deeds.' "

"Go then, Ascetic," said the Blessed One. "Having on your brows this crown of patience, go and Turn the Wheel of the Excellent Doctrine in the land of these cruel and violent men. Having in your own spirit deliverance, this jewel of

brightness, be to others, even to those who wish it not and revile thee, a deliverer. Yourself having crossed the stream, draw from its waters others also. Having attained salvation, lead others to this nectar which you have found."

"I would go with him," entreated Panchkori. "For in one day the Tathāgata saved Eklochon my friend and myself, and to this battle I would be his comrade."

Moggallana listened, and a crooked smile curved over his face. "What! send to the country of the south two ascetics that are one-eyed? Then would those foolish ones think that the Doctrine brings with it some poison—or that only the one-eyed perceive it!"

"I need Kana with me," said Dhammasenapati. "I grow old and my mind sometimes cannot find the words it seeks. He is my helper with the monks that are newly ordained."

So Eklochon bowed his head and the Lord laid on him hands of blessing. Then he went forth alone, to the country to the southward.

As he went, from Moggallana's face the smile died utterly, and his mind was troubled. "Has the Lord considered that the men to whom he goes will slay his disciple?"

"I have considered it." And the Lord, looking

after that departing ascetic, spoke the Discourse of Earnestness.

“Earnestness is the path of Nirvana, heedlessness is the path of death. Those who have earnestness die not; those that are heedless are as if dead while yet the world calls them living.

“Nirvana, Ascetics, is for those whose eyes are clean and clear-sighted. These gaze on it with eyes unwinking and unwavering—like the eyes of the Immortal Gods!

“Earnest in the crowd of the heedless, watchful in the mob of those asleep, the wise man goes forward as a horse that is trained for racing, leaving behind the pacing hack!

“By being earnest did Maghavan attain to the kingship over all Gods.

“The wise man, driving away pride of heart by earnestness, mounts on the terrace of wisdom’s mansion and sees the fools in the dust and stench of the street below.

“The monk who is earnest, whom neither fear nor pride can fetter, that monk moves through the world as a fire, burning up all his bonds, whether great or trivial. That man is near to Nirvana!”

In these years the Lord himself wandered, Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine. In these years the Lord's disciples wandered, Turning the Wheel in all men's sight. As by slow outflowings, sinking here into a saucer of sunken earth and there (it may be) deepened by some stone that holds it, water spreads widely, so the Doctrine became known throughout all Magadha and the lands of the Sakyas northward and of the Vangas eastward and southward.

The yellow-robed ascetics with their bowls stood before leper and horseman, before sweeper and king. In the smiting of the summer heats they rested, and by dawn and twilight walked through the ways and taught the people. In the rains' downpour they listened and meditated.

One day Kana the half-blinded ascetic returned to the mango park which Ambapali the courtesan had given the Order. It was the time when monks should travel: sweetly scenting the soft warm airs flew the invisible shafts of the Five-armed God: it was the season of flowering and of the black bee's coming.

As the monk entered, stumbling, Moggallana,

eyeing him keenly, said: "Panchkori" (for the old man used still Kana's former name) "it is not yet the hour and day of returning." He meant: "The Lord sent thee forth to Turn the Wheel of the Doctrine for these three months and more. Not yet is that season due when men cannot stir abroad freely, by reason of the flooded fields and ways." He said this not in reproach, but in kindness of questioning.

"Where now is the Lord?" asked Kana, not answering his demand.

"He has gone to talk with those monks at Padanathpur. Foolish ones, who have come to blows over matters of doctrine! I await him here and prepare the evening meal."

"I will do it with thee, Dadathakur" (Elder-Brother-Lord). He began to gather sticks for firewood.

Moggallana the Discerner of Spirits read that ascetic's heart, and on his shoulder placing a hand he said: "Panchkori, all things are transient. And if that old man's days are folded away, as a garment now useless and thrown to the dust which will recall it, yet is also his sorrow ended. Field labour and penury and blindness will he know no more."

Panchkori wept. Then he said, chiding him-

self: "I forgot the Lord's words, that the wise gaze on grief and joy as matters indifferent. That those who cling to the love of friends and family forge for themselves fetters that cut through flesh and bone and pierce with poison the marrow itself. Yet was that old man my father a shelter to me when I was a child—the son of poor folk and despised, as thou knowest —"

"No man here", said the aged disciple gently, "despises this ascetic. Has not the Lord himself called thee no herd-boy but a brahmin, a warrior whom the foe made not ashamed? Tell me then of what I know—that thy father has died—and it may be that in the telling this ascetic's heart will find ease! For he speaks to a friend—to an older comrade in the Way, and one who sees the End Ordained, yet has still so much of sinful weakness that he cares for thee, Panchkori."

Many of the younger monks marvelled that the Lord should keep by him as his chief disciples these two, Ananda the Lord's cousin—whose eyes followed the Blessed One with such love as is itself the very mesh and close-knit texture of *indrajala*, the net of illusion—and Moggallana, who at whiles would walk the Noble Eightfold

Path as might a man inebriated, uttering words of praise or anger. Ahai! not yet had this aged ascetic attained salvation, though so near to death!

Panchkori replied: "I said to myself, I will follow the waters of Kundalini upwards, for beside those waters the Lord found me and saved me. And I will see that old man my father, if he yet lives."

Moggallana, bending low to hide his face while he blew hard on the seed of flame which he had caught from flints rubbed together, said: "On the third day after thy departure the Blessed One spoke to us. 'Panchkori seeks his father. But at this hour—it was the first hour of the morning—that old man has won release.' "

They were silent, diligent in their evening task. After a while Panchkori said: "Dadathakur! Why was that old man my father permitted to enter this life? I saw his days—they were full of evil. In labour and penury they began, and in blindness and helplessness they ended! Is there any need for such to exist? They are merely vessels through which the water of suffering runs for a season."

"The water of patience runs with it," said Moggallana slowly. "It may be that God himself

is in that patience (though our eyes see him not!). You have asked me a question my soul has asked of itself, often and often when I have sat in the hero-seat of meditation. Younger Brother, I cannot answer. I know, and thou knowest, that all things are sorrow, all things are pain, all things are delusion. Kill then desire, which is the root of sorrow, sending thee back into life following life—as a plant whose root, though axes have cut down its stem and raging fires have destroyed it, remains quick in the earth.”

“Desire”, said Panchkori slowly, “has killed itself. I saw it lying dead—where thou knowest.”

The old man paused from his work, and hawk-eyed gazed at his companion. “Panchkori, on the first morning when the Aryans saw the sun’s arising they lit a sacrificial flame. From that fire rose a smoke into the white clear air, wandering upward towards the snows of Himalaya. Look now into the heaven above thee!”

Panchkori looked.

“Where is the smoke of that sacrifice?”

Panchkori wondered if madness had taken hold of the old man’s spirit. “Dadathakur, it has vanished—who knows how long since?”

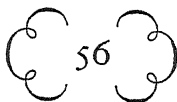
“Ten thousand years have passed since men’s

eyes watched it curl and waste away in lessening threads of mist! Even so—a time will come when this thy sorrow, and my—sorrow—for some whom I remember—will be where that smoke has vanished. Hasten that time, O God that fulfillest all lives and seasons! That my friend and I may attain the dreamless peace!” The old man bowed his head to his toil.

When the Tathāgata returned, he asked: “Where is Panchkori?”

Moggallana pointed to a statuesque figure in the moonlight. “He will sit till dawn in the hero-seat of meditation. It was his desire and I gainsaid it not.”

As dawn was breaking Kana bowed low before the Blessed One. “Let me take the dust of the Lord’s feet. I go now to the country of the Vangas.”



Meghiya the monk accompanied the Lord one day, bearing his bowl and robe. Seeing near-by a mango-grove beside falling waters, he said: “Lord, I would go to that grove

and be a while in meditation. Afterwards I will rejoin the Blessed One."

"Go not," said the Lord.

"My heart is now uplifted, and thoughts of the Noble Eightfold Path throng to it, as bees to that flowery nectar."

"There throng to it hornets also, and sharp-sworded wasps! Remain with me, and *walk* the Noble Eightfold Path."

"No. It is the hour for meditation," said this disobedient ascetic, and left the Blessed One.

In that grove to which he betook himself sat Meghiya the monk, a man no longer in the prime of life but with peaked and narrowing features and with gaps in his teeth here and there. He sat in the hero-seat indeed; but not those of a hero were his thoughts! Mara the Evil One drew up (he had heard Meghiya's speech with the Blessed One), and to Meghiya he said: "This mango fragrance is sweet. It is as the scent of that house of Ambapali the King's mistress. Such scents fall from the shoulders of lovely women. That black bee, busy gathering nectar, is like the ink-black brows of the damsels in the palace of King Bimbisara. That lady filling her pitcher at the falling waters, is she not fair of face, gracious of gesture and movement, wondrously

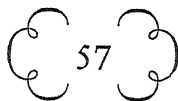
smooth and rounded in golden shoulder and body? See with what gentle majesty she walks, with one curved arm uplifted to the pitcher on her head!"

Thus and thus spoke Mara, and drew from beneath his cloak his lute and played on it softly. Meghiya the monk drowsed in the mango fragrance, and in his dreams appeared the *apsaras* of Indra's halls. The *kinnaras* danced enfolded in his arms.

That evening, at the time of Turning the Wheel in Company, the Blessed One looked full at Meghiya, the disobedient monk, whose face reddened like the moon of harvest and he hung his head.

"Dost thou understand why I said to thee: 'Go not to that mango-grove but continue with me in the way?' " asked the Blessed One.

"Lord, I understand," said the disobedient monk.



Devadatta sent two foolish brahmins, men who would stir up strife, to rebuke the Lord for his doctrine. "What is this?" they asked

him. "Thou, who art not of priestly caste, hast drawn away this Assembly—and how many others also!—from service of the Gods and their temples! Where are thy sacrifices—that please the Gods?"

The Tathāgata answered:

*"I lay no wood, brahmins, for outward altars.
Within the self a fire that flares nor falters
I kindle daily. Anger, hate, and will,
Passion and lust—these are the beasts I kill."*

As he led them away, Moggallana who had discernment of spirits said to the brahmins: "Within yourselves you ask: How will these monks, whose armour is a robe of saffron cloth and whose hands are without weapons, keep themselves when robbers or an army of our enemies come? Know then, hating no man we dwell in peace among men full of hatred. How shall the rumour of wrath outside our borders ruffle this haven? Deep and boundless is the Tathāgata, like to the sea for depth and fullness of quiet waters!"

And Kassapa, whom they called the Prince, looking after those brahmins said: "They offer sacrifices, they freely inflict pain and death. And having done so they say: 'I have done all that is required. I have walked in the Path of Salvation.' Living on the gifts of others who labour, they store up wealth for themselves, and in these kinds: costly robes and chariots drawn by prancing steeds, palanquins, beds soft with pelts stripped from animals, scents and spiced foods and intoxicating liquor. To my mind these are not the signs of the true brahmin."

The Lord by silence assented to Kassapa's words.

"Living on the gifts of those who labour, they delight in public shows. Wherever there are girls and women dancing, or lines of men seated together to beat drums and clap tabors, at all concerts and recitals and theatrical shows, at funeral ceremonials and marriages, tomtomings, flutings, gymnastics and club-playing and wrestling, contests with cudgels and staves and swords, processions and parades of soldiers, at feasts in memorial

of ancestors, at deadly struggles between elephants or stallions or bulls or goats or rhinoceroses or buffaloes or cocks or quails or tarantulas, at butting of rams—there you may see these brahmins, with pleasure like a torch in their eyes. To my mind these are not the signs of the true brahmin.”

The Lord by silence assented to Kassapa's words.

“Living on the gifts of those who labour, they while away their time with sports and amusements that to me seem of little worth as regards advancement in the Right Path. They sit down and set between them some game—perhaps with a board of sixty-four squares or it may be of one hundred squares. They dice and fling up cubes in the air and study the way they fall, having wagers on the result. They mark out patterns on the earth and show their skill by hopping over the marks which they have traced. They pile up a heap of sticks and then pull out the sticks one by one so as not to shake the sticks that are left. They sketch obscene shapes and figures and burst into laughter at their own handiwork. They toss and catch balls, they blow trumpets, they indulge in archery, they flick marbles from their fingers, they make their

bodies into windmills, they have ploughing contests, they guess what this thing weighs and what is the length and width of that other thing, they say to each other: 'I know what is in your mind! It is *this* thought. Now am I not right?' They mimic and mock the gait and speech of men whom they know or whom they see on the road. In many such contemptible ways they pass their time. And to me it appears that not so do men proceed firmly in the Right Path. To my mind these are not the signs of the true brahmin."

The Lord by silence assented to Kassapa's words.

"Living on the gifts of those who labour, they rest after their great exertions such as I have described, on lofty and richly worked beds and couches, with fine covers of soft long fleece and quilts inwrought with flowers and parrots and pomegranate fruits: with gold and silken threads running in and out: or on downy carpets or chariot rugs and blankets: tiger-skins and leopard-skins and deer-skins: cushions and pillows. To my mind these are not the signs of the true brahmin."

The Lord by silence assented to Kassapa's words.

“Living on the gifts of those who labour, they adorn their bodies. They lie in scented baths and they smear fragrances on their hair and they drip with sweetly exhaling oils and unguents. They make use of mirrors, and of barbers who shampoo them. They draw black lines above their eyebrows. They indulge in bouquets, bracelets and necklaces, tiaras, carved walking-sticks, umbrellas, jewels and adornments of sparkling gems, peacock fans and buffalo-tail chowries, flowing white robes and swords with inlaid hilts. They clean their teeth with special preparations. To my mind these are not the signs of the true brahmin.”

The Lord by silence assented to Kassapa's words.

“Living on the gifts of those who labour, they gossip and talk meanly and foolishly. They have intimate chatter about kings or robbers or statesmen and other such important beings. They have stories of war and of peril, about women and ghosts and demons and gods, about accidents by land and miseries by sea, about food and drink and garlands and chariots and garments: about things which exist and things which do not exist and never have existed. Some of them pretend to read the future: by sacrifices

of ghee and oil, by ejecting liquids suddenly from the mouth and watching where they fall, by dreams and by cloths that rats have eaten full of holes. They will tell you how to remain in health or escape danger, how to build in a place that is lucky, how to fence your property round from goblins and devils, how to obtain excellent harvests and abundance of good mangoes, how to cure the bite of serpents or scorpions or parrots, how to know the length of life which fate has allotted to you. They say that they understand the language of animals, and they will discuss for payment (which must be good) the merits and flaws in jewels, garments, weapons of all sorts, women and young boys, slaves of either sex, horses, elephants, iguanas, jungle-fowl or tame fowl, peacocks, snipe, oxen, deer, turtles, creatures with long ears and creatures with short ears. They are prepared to tell you medicines that will purge the bowels or cause you to vomit up what is troubling you: to remove infertility or to make an impotent man charged with virility. They talk much of eclipses of sun and moon, and of planets in conjunction and opposition, of earthquakes and thunder and lightning. In short, they arrogate to themselves a life of varied and monstrous ability and usefulness. To

my mind these are not the signs of the true brahmin."

The Lord by silence assented to Kassapa's words.

"Kassapa", said Moggallana, "is indeed learned in the ways of brahmins."

And Ananda made this song for the brethren:

*We lay no wood for altar-fires, no life
Trembles beneath our sacrificial knife.
Agni the King, burning the woods to dust,
Is ice beside the flame that burns up lust!
The Sun with love looks on our harmlessness,
Unfed by us, he serves us none the less!
Dark Maghavan (his thunders waked in chorus—
His inky banners blackly mustered o'er us—
In the dread month of tempest, when the night
His demons set with lightning flares alight)
Victims by us withheld so little needs—
Our "atheist" back on him so little heeds—
That on the Vulture's Peak with plenteous
 showers
He wakes our hearts to song! and earth to
 flowers!*

After Kana returned from Turning the Wheel in the country of the Vangas, one day the Lord said: "I am old, Ascetics, I need an attendant. Some of you have proved yourselves forward, going one way when I must go another. Some of you are not deft-handed, your help is useless. Think in yourselves, and tell me, Is there among you one who can be my attendant?"

Sariputta said: "Let me be the Blessed One's servant!"

"Then would the aged have for servant the yet more aged! Thy work, Disciple, is to teach those that have Entered the Stream."

Moggallana said earnestly: "True, Lord. But let Dhammasenapati and I together be your servants. Then can there be no fault or remissness."

"I have two old watchdogs, and I know them both. Thy work, Disciple, is to be an Eye that overawes the slothful and those prone to passion and desire. Let me have a younger servant."

Kassapa then offered himself.

But the Lord smiling answered: "Who seeing us together will believe that *I* am the master and the Prince my servant?"

All those Ascetics, with zeal bending forward like the petals of a lotus when it closes, and with their hands together making one hand, begged: "Let me be the Blessed One's servant!" Only Kana kept silent; and Ananda, saying within himself: "I am the Lord's cousin, and men would say that for this cause was I chosen. And I am a foolish and simple man, no discerner of spirits (as is Moggallana), neither learned in the Doctrine (as is Dhammasenapati). Looking round me, in every monk I see some excellence. In myself I see none, that I should push myself forward for such high honour."

Then said some of the monks: "Why has not Ananda offered to be the Lord's servant?"

The Lord looked at Ananda. Ananda answered: "Let the Blessed One choose. Otherwise, what choice is it"?

So the Blessed One said: "Ananda, wilt thou become this servant that I need?"

Ananda said: "Most gladly will I serve the Blessed One, if four things I may reject and four things I may claim and accept."

The Lord by silence gave assent; and Ananda said: "These four things let me refuse. If the Lord be given a rich soft dress, let not the like be given to his servant. If any give him alms,

let them not be considered as a gift to me also. Let me not sit or sleep in the Lord's Fragrance Chamber. And if any ask him to a feast, let them not ask me also with him."

(Lest some should say: "Ananda is the Lord's kinsman, and his youth passed in palaces. He serves the Blessed One in order that he may share in the comforts which we give an old man.")

The Lord said: "Say now what four things thou wouldst have."

"These. If any ask the Lord to their mansion let me be his companion thither. If any seek the Lord's presence, let them not attain it except I bring them to it. If I myself at any hour desire to be with the Lord, let my desire be granted. And whatever words the Blessed One speaks openly let me hear again in private (for my mind is slow to grasp and to understand)."

So Ananda became the Lord's servant.

That night, as Kana looked at the sky above him, he thought: "The moon is but a wisp, wasting to nothing: the stars have no permanence, night by night flaming out and perishing each morning: the wind that now whispers will presently be silent. All things are transient. The Blessed One thought not of me as his servant."

In that moment he saw beside him the Lord standing.

“Panchkori” (for so would the Lord at times address him, using this disciple’s name when he first joined the Order), “why didst thou alone—thou and Ananda, my cousin, you two only—not offer to be my servant?”

“I am a man halfblinded, Lord. He that would serve the Lord has need of all that a man has. If by reason of my little sight there were any fault in the service, that to me would be sorrow beyond endurance.”

Kana stooping low took the dust of the Blessed One’s feet. Then he rose and stood humbly before him.

“Blindness, Disciple, rests not in the outward vision, but in the soul. And I think this disciple has the true discernment—none other matters! I knew what was in thy mind. When I sought for service, what need was there that I should stand with begging-bowl held out before my herd-boy whom I found in the robbers’ cave by Kundalini?”

“There was none, Lord.”

The cold winds came, and the days grew soft and gracious. The Blessed One said: "I go to the Kundalini, to the caves where I found Eklochon and Kana."

Journeying southward, they came to the deep narrow valley, and saw the caves pitting the cliffside, and the clustered nests of the wild bees. Murmuring below them flowed Kundalini softly, and the small flowers of agnus-castus were like a blue mist beside it.

Ananda said: "Lord, to me it seems that these caves—and this green wide wilderness—and this river that wanders and sings to itself below us—were made to be a refuge for the Brethren."

"They shall become one," the Lord answered. "After I have left you, Panchkori shall come here, and in these caves shall he teach those who would Turn the Wheel of the Law."

Hearing the Lord's words, in Panchkori's mind joy opened, like a *kunda* flower. "Lord, it is here that I would choose to end my days! For it was here that in times when I lay a captive in the net of ignorance—as a fish lies gasping in the meshes of the net that has caught him——"

“Panchkori”, said Moggallana with some harshness, “knows too much about slaying and snaring.”

“I was a herd-boy,” said Panchkori simply, “and often and often, as I whiled away the long summer days beside this stream, I did as herd-boys do. I was a foe to the wild lives of the wilderness, and they feared me. For this reason my whole being stoops low to take the dust of the Tathāgata’s feet! He has said that here I shall be their father and brother, so that the deer that were in dread of Panchkori the herd-boy shall come and go freely with Kana the ascetic. Is not this the thing that was in the Lord’s mind?”

“It is the thing,” the Lord replied.



In this forest beside Kundalini the Lord remained seven days. “Clear, unclouded are the nights,” sang Ananda:

*“Clear, unclouded are the nights, the trees
Are as a heaven that showers
Not rain but scent of flowers,
Gentle yet warm the sun: sweet, cool, the breeze.”*

Sariputta said: "Happy is our friend Ananda, whom all monks venerate! He is the Tathāgata's servant and ever with him. And gracious, gracious, gracious—surpassingly gracious and lovely—is this forest by Kundalini. This indeed is as Indra's heaven! Would we might abide here always! Yet there is that which adds glory even to this glory which surrounds us! Of what nature, Ananda, is the ascetic who adds glory to this forest by Kundalini?"

"He that is full of knowledge—who has meditated on the Excellent Doctrine and pierced to its heart—as a knife, first of all clearing the harsh hairy ends, pierces to the heart of a coconut—he that then instructs those who have newly Attained to Eat the Fruit of Entering the Stream—that ascetic, O venerable Dhammasenapati, is the one who adds glory to this forest by Kundalini!"

Revata said: "He that delights in the hero-seat of meditation, who sits alone in lonely places, and in the music of Kundalini that flows softly hears the ringing of the harps of the Excellent Doctrine, that ascetic is the one who adds glory to this forest!"

Kana said: "He who remembers the sin he formerly wrought, and with deep yearning and

longing holds out his hands to all that breathes, and says: 'I am your brother and would show pity for the wrong which once I did you,' that monk, if he may attain to this! he adds glory to this forest!"

"It is the monk", said Kassapa, "who loves this life of forest meditation, yet praises also the life of the *blukka* who must stand with begging-bowl extended, in the crowded dusty street where lepers walk and the poor are toiling—who loves poverty and loneliness and into whose bowl God pours the rice of salvation—that monk adds to the glory of this forest!"

Anuruddha said: "It is the monk who has attained to the Eye of Inward Vision, so that he sees thousands on thousands of worlds. That monk adds glory to this forest!"

Moggallana said, looking on Dhammasenapati with the yearning of long comradeship and love, "When two monks, walking together, discourse concerning the Noble Eightfold Path, and by questioning each other draw out truth upon truth—as a householder from his bag will draw out coins! and afterwards draw apart, each to the hero-seat of meditation, and there consider on what they have found—of such nature, Dhammasenapati, is the monk who adds glory to this

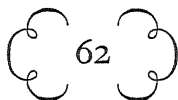
forest! But come, since thou art the Chief of Those Who Instruct, tell *us* the answer to thy question! Of what nature is the monk who adds glory to this forest?"

Dhammasenapati after thinking long made answer: "It is the monk who is of his own mind the ruler; his mind does not rule him! At the opening of each day he considers: In what state of mind shall I spend each hour until night falls? As a king who possesses a box full of many robes, of many and varying colours, in the first watch of each day decides what robe he will wear, and at noon changes to the robe which then he chooses, and so also at night—so this monk ruling his own mind at each hour wears the dress of meditation which he has chosen. That ascetic, Moggallana, adds glory to this forest by Kundalini!"

Then those ascetics, exultant as men who have found vast treasure, said: "We will take this question to the Lord himself! He surely can decide it for us!"

The Lord, having heard what each had said, answered: "Each has spoken well, and as his own portion of the Way has taught him. For all the Noble Eightfold Path is one and unchanging, yet to each is given also a path which he

alone treads; and it takes him to the end which his thread of fate has woven. But now hear what ascetic adds glory to this forest! It is the monk who has returned from his begging round: having eaten his meal he takes his place on the heroseat of meditation: his body is erect and unbending, his mind fixed and alert. Gathering his faculties for the conflict—as a cat that would spring gathers together all its power—so, well knit and watchful, he resolves: ‘I will not rise from this seat till I have shaken from me all clinging to desire, and free from that clinging have attained deliverance!’ That ascetic, Disciples, adds glory to this forest by Kundalini!”



By Kundalini's waters the Lord spoke the Discourse of Pity.

“All that lives is subject to sorrow, Ascetics. All that breathes is subject to suffering. The deer that drink of Kundalini's waters at sunrise and sunset: the tiger that lies in wait for the deer: the birds that waken us with singing: all suffer

and are in bonds. Kana my ascetic and Moggallana, these two are old friends. Yet Kana knows not all that passes in Moggallana's mind, neither does Moggallana know all that Kana has thought and endured. Each to each can speak indeed, and say many things, some clear and simple and others hard to grasp! Yet each unto each lies silent, as a deep cave that gives no answer to the light outside. If you know not each other then (and you have voices and hands which can write down language), how little do you know of those other lives of beast and bird which the Creator has set beside us! It is a fiend, and no man, that exults when the life which he does not understand lies dying in pain, in the eyes of deer or hare which he has struck down.

"How long hast thou been with me, O herd-boy whom I found by Kundalini's waters?"

"Three and twenty years have I been with the Blessed One," replied Panchkori.

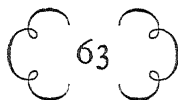
"Three and twenty years! Yet that right hand of thine—hold it forth, that all may see!—why is it hard and swollen in the gap between thumb and fingers?"

"Lord, because there I held my staff of herding, and my woodman's knife with which I cut staves—and other things."

“After three and twenty years still thy hand keeps its impress of the life which was thine for so short a time by Kundalini’s waters!”

“Lord, it will keep this impress when I am laid on my pyre for burning!”

“Even so, Ascetics, the man who has lit the fire of anguish in the eyes of deer or hare—who has found his pleasure in their pain and dying—that man will keep on mind and soul the hardness of his deed until the end! That man is not my disciple who shows not pity!”



They left the valley then, returning to the country of King Bimbisara, Magadha. And as they passed through wild places, they meditated one day at noon, beside a stream called Gandeswari.

The Lord asked out of the silence: “Moggallana, what is in thy mind?”

Deeply troubled, Moggallana the Discerner of Spirits (he was the Chief of Those That Had Insight), replied: “Lord, as I walked by this stream this morning I came upon a place of

burning, and on the sands I saw a skull. I took it up in my hands, and the man to whom it belonged rose up, and drew my spirit from my body, to converse with him and question him. Lord, it was Eklochon thy ascetic. He has been slain, as the Lord knew would happen. His body was burnt on these sands."

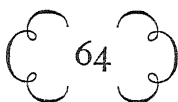
"Say on, and give all my ascetic's message."

"Eklochon said: 'Tell the Blessed One that I rose from my bed of death as one full of fear, expecting to meet not friends but ravening foes, my evil deeds when I was a robber. But instead I saw only a band of smiling companions who greeted me with kind words. Then I said: "Where are those demons whom my own hands fashioned?" They answered: "We ourselves are those demons. But by the doctrine of thy Tathāgata have we been changed by degrees, year following year, until we have become thy friends and desire only to serve thee! There are no demons to torment thee, Ascetic." ' ' "

Then the Lord spoke the Discourse of Setting Out and Seeking.

"A king, Ascetics, setting out on a journey requires greater preparation than a poor man. Even so the soul, setting out on its journey, needs greater preparation than a bird winging

its way to its nest or a serpent making its way to its hole. Remember, this journey is appointed for all, from life to death! Make therefore preparation betimes, that thy journey end not in misery and terrors! What soul wilt thou take with thee into the life which is to come?"



In this place also the Lord walked with Ananda in the forest; and in a place of silence they stood for a while watching, themselves also silent, and the deer and squirrels came out in their presence.

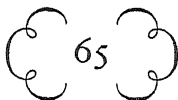
"As the Blessed One knows," then said Ananda, "I was brought up in a king's household. Yet, I know not why, to me are the forests alone delightsome. In deserts where no men are, there is in my spirit a deep well of joy and peace!"

The Lord stood in that place, and his eyes were full of smiling. "Forests, Ananda, where the world finds no delight, they are truly delightful, and in them the passionless will find delight, for they look not for their own pleasure!"

"The beasts and birds are at peace with us,

Lord, and with us they dwell, as in an ordered household, where there is sufficient for all, brothers and sisters dwell at peace together!”

“Think not this strange, Ananda! The man of peace is known! Peace he bears as his gift to all that breathe! The evil man comes bearing death and pain as *his* gifts; and where he has passed the wilderness mourns, while he goes onward, thinking: ‘I have shown myself great!’ For us, Ananda, this forest is an assembly of eyes that are filled with trust and love! Within themselves our friends say: ‘Those are the ascetics who wear the yellow robe. Truly in them is no cause for fear!’ ”



They came to the kingdom of Magadha, and to Vesali, that rich and sinful city; and here in a banyan-grove were young men of the Licchavi nobles seeking only pleasure. For one who was without his wife they had bought a woman to serve him. Those that were wives taunted her and tormented her. Hearing now that the Lord had come, she fled from those women; and

Ananda said: "Lord, there is a woman who would speak with thee."

The Lord asked her wherefore she had fled; and she answered: "Lord, it became known to me that this my body was as a house which had no owner, which all who would pay the price might enter. I despised myself when I knew that it was not mine, and that even those to whom it was the gate of pleasure despised me, the keeper of the door."

Those young men following her came and asked the Tathāgata, "We have lost a woman for whom we had paid. Has the Lord seen such a woman?" (For they knew whither she had fled.)

The Lord therefore asked them: "Which is more profitable to you, to go in search of a woman or to go in search of yourselves?"

They, looking strangely and questioningly at each other, at length answered: "To go in search of ourselves."

"We are they that have gone in search of ourselves," replied then the Blessed One; and expounded to them the Noble Eightfold Path. Some of them, being ashamed, Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream. Others smiled, and went back to their pleasure. Never-

theless, the Lord gave not back the woman whom they had bought.



By Devadatta's counsel, Ajatasattu slew his father King Bimbisara, and conquered the Kings of Vesali and Kosala and shed much blood.

They told the Tathāgata, who replied: "Truly Devadatta has gone in search of himself, and an evil self he has found! He is as a man who going through groves of demons at the end finds himself face to face with one that will tear his body and soul asunder! So will it be with the man that counsels bloodshed."

Devadatta told Ajatasattu: "Gotama draws aside men from thy service. They put on the yellow robe, and wander begging—some of them strong young men who could serve in thine army."

King Ajatasattu therefore came to the Tathāgata, a King riding in the midst of chariots and of servants singing his praise. He asked the Blessed One: "Of what use is this Order? And by renunciation whom do you serve, Ascetics,

save your own love of idleness? Elephant-drivers, charioteers, grooms, cooks, barbers, keepers of brothels, confectioners and sweet-meat-sellers, garland-makers, bath attendants, spearmen, musicians, slaves—all these by their labours do good and they live in comfort.”

“They live in comfort truly,” answered the Tathāgata, “for they surround a king and minister to his lusts. But there are others whom the King has not mentioned (whom perchance the King has forgotten), men and women who toil in the King’s fields when they are deep from the swelling rain, and plant out the young rice, paddling it with their toes. Do such men and women live in ease? or live to be old and full of honour? There are also the men and women who sweep the streets before thy palace, and do menial deeds. All these toiling for a handful of food pay out of their poverty taxes to thee, King Ajatasattu.”

“It is right that they pay them,” replied the King, “for by my power are they preserved from foreign foes.”

“And their *preservers*,” said the Tathāgata, “the warriors who fight for thee and kill men when thou commandest, and the brahmins who offer prayers for thee—these (if I remember

aright) pay no taxes. Hast thou anything more that thou wouldst say to me?"

Ajatasattu, facing that Lion of the Sakya lineage, trembled, and the sweat poured from his forehead. He remembered his sin; and he said: "Wickedness flung me down and overcame me, so that for the desire of rule I took from the righteous King my father his life. Will the Blessed One—that I may not sin so again!—accept my wickedness as wickedness, for I so acknowledge it!"

"I accept it as wickedness," said the Lord.

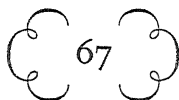
Then Devadatta bribed robbers to slay the Lord in the forest. But they, seeing him walk onward without fear—as a ghost without fear will walk up to living men who shake to behold it coming—lifted not their weapons but confessed what they had come to do. They Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream.

Devadatta also bribed and made drunk an elephant-driver, in the season of *must*, to madden his beast to trample the Lord in the streets. But the driver being drunk fell; and his body the elephant broke to pieces, and flung it on a house-top.

All these devices, seeing, the Lord looked not at them. As a man who says of the King's mes-

senger running with his bundle: "Those letters are not for me," and turns again to his business, whether it be hoeing or planting or selling wares, so the Tathāgata seeing those messengers of death said: "They are not for me. Why then should I halt even to look at them?"

But to his disciples he began to say: "My time draws near, when I must Cross the Stream. Look well to your own selves, Ascetics, for your own selves must become your refuge."



There were monks at Kosambi who quarrelled among themselves. A certain monk at the time of meditation had let his eyes wander to a wedding procession, and had thought of the excellence of the dresses and the sweet-sounding music. Others had seen his sin and charged him with it. He answered: "It was no great matter. My eyes looking straight before me could not help but see what was there to be seen," So he acknowledged no fault. Some therefore said: "Such an ascetic should be expelled until he admits his fault." Others said: "Since he sees no

fault and intended no fault, what fault was there?" So the two groups came to blows and reviling.

The Tathāgata heard, and went to Kosambi. Long time he strove with them in gentleness and kindness, and told them of Dighiti, who was King of the Kosalas. He was defeated in war by the King of the Kasis, and hid himself among his people, in a temple beside the Ganges. His barber, inflamed with lust of gain, told his enemy of the place, and he was brought out and put to death by the stake of impalation. Before he died, to his son he said: "Look neither far nor yet closely, but look at all things as beyond this world. Neither despise nor cherish what happens here, but accept all and forget all. Not by hate is hate ended, but by non-hatred." So he died. And his son disguising himself became the servant of the king who had cruelly slain his own father. There came a time when these two were alone in a deep forest, and the king said to his servant: "Carry my spear for me, for I am weary of hunting." Then to this servant spoke Mara the Evil One, with counsel: "Slay now the man who slew thy dear father in such anguish. No man will ever know of the deed." But to him alone in the forest came those other words,

which his dear father spoke when they led him out to execution; and he fell at the feet of the king his foe and told him: "I am the son of the King whom thou didst murder so vilely, and for hate of thee and seeking vengeance I became thy servant. But now hear what my father said when he died, and go in peace." Then the King who was spared was full of astonishment, and said: "I did wrong and if thou hadst slain me thou wouldst have done a just requital." So to the servant he restored the kingdom he had taken from his father. Thus did hate cease by meeting with non-hatred.

But those monks, hearing all this with impatience, put it by and continued their strife. The Tathāgata said then: "Come, Ananda. Come, Panchkori. These men are utterly without sense in their infatuation." And as they left them he said: "Of all sins is this the greatest, to cause strife among the brethren. The monk who causes it, truly I say that I know not how he shall escape hell!"

After this, wandering and everywhere Turning the Wheel of the Truth, the Lord came to Nalanda. Here the monks, certain of them that were unwise (for they had Attained but to the stage of Entering the Stream), asked the Lord concerning castes. "By merit, Lord, a man is born a brahmin and by demerit a sweeper or other low fellow. Yet in our Order we are all one."

The Lord replied: "Ganges, Yamuna, Sarasvati, all these and many other rivers, are separate currents and flow by different lands and cities. Yet in the end are all engulfed in the one ocean, which drowns all mark or memory of Ganges, Yamuna, and Sarasvati, whether their water reached it in their own stream or borne by some greater stream. Even so, in the Noble Fourfold Truth are all castes lost and forgotten. You are all subject to the one yoke of sorrow and transiency. Forget therefore that some of you were brahmins, others, it may be, warriors or merchants or ploughmen or shepherds."

Sariputta the Chief of Those That Gave Instruction, an old man bent with years and

like a crescent moon curving on his staff, advanced from the throng of the ascetics, and uttered his *Singhanad*, his lion roar of witness. "Such, Ascetics, is my belief in the Blessed One, that I say that never has there been, never will there be, and there is not now" (he smote on the earth with his staff), "another ascetic or brahmin mightier or wiser than the Tathāgata who is our master. He is the Lord of Enlightenment!"

The Lord, smiling, asked him then: "Hast thou, Dhammasenapati, entered the mind of all Buddhas that have been in ages past, or are to come, or even of me myself?"

Dhammasenapati acknowledged: "I have entered none of these. When the Lord found me, as he knows, I was enmeshed in the wisdom of the foolish ones—which is no wisdom! Now I know nothing save what the Lord himself has shown me. Yet in that knowledge" (his lion roar rose again) "I rest, as the lotus rests on the lake's surface, its root firmly anchored. As in a strong fort which keeps a kingdom, where there is but one gate—watched over by warders, guarded with moat and portcullis and mighty walls—the keeper of the fort knows that but by this one gate must enter all that come into the fort (for there is no other door, not even one

so big that a cat might thrust in its body!)—so I have seen the fort which keeps the kingdom of truth, and it has but one gate! By that gate have I entered! And there is no other!”

Bowing low, then Dhammasenapati said: “As the Blessed One remembers, when we Entered the Stream Moggallana and I were already advanced in years. I am now feeble, an aged disciple who can walk no longer save with pain and slowness. I delay the brethren, as a sick cow delays the herd when night is falling. Let me abide here, at Nalanda, and await death’s coming. Neither by day nor night will the Blessed One be absent from my thought.”

So the Lord placed his hands on his head and replied: “Go, old watchdog, to thy rest. Thy task is fulfilled; the root of rebirth, which is desire, is torn from this plot of mind and spirit.”

Moggallana said: “This other watchdog will keep with the flock a few days longer. Though my heart yearns to be with its ancient comrade!”

They built for Sariputta therefore a grass-roofed hut of reeds, where it was but a few paces' walk to a stream. The Lord charged a lay disciple who lived near it: "See that this Ascetic's bowl be daily filled."

And Ananda, Kana, Moggallana, these three, came to Dhammasenapati, and said: "To-morrow we go onward, Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine with the Tathāgata. To-night we would spend with thee our old companion and teacher, and would sleep under this banyan outside thy door." They stayed with him therefore.

Moggallana said: "I am now so old that from the world there comes to me but one voice, that of death which calls me. And in the hero-seat of meditation hearing that one voice sounding, I ask myself: 'Is there now any single thing in all the world to which I can cling and be free from sin?'"

"That question certainly", said Dhammasenapati, "the well-taught disciple must ask himself."

"And asking it", said Moggallana sadly, "I wonder if perchance there is. And despair seizes

my spirit that such a question should still uplift its head before me.”

“Without cause does this despair come,” answered Dhammasenapati. “When the disciple even asks himself that question, then he *knows* that desire is dead within him, and he replies: ‘No! Now am I sure that in all the world there is nothing to which I can cling without sin. Therefore I loose my bonds, and fling them from me!’ ”

Thus spoke the old warrior, continuing his lion roar beside that trivial brook and looking out on the silence of stretching sands.

Ananda said: “Then is there nothing, Dhammasenapati, whose thought now causes grief to rise in thy mind?” Kana also asked himself this question, far within; and his memory travelled through dark places, while his tongue kept peace.

After a while Dhammasenapati answered: “As I watched the sun falling low, and the skies whitening for his setting, in the hour before you came, I thought of other sunsets, and I asked myself this same question, Ananda. ‘Is there now in the whole world one single thing of which I may say that its passing would cause me grief and dismay?’ And my mind, concentrating her

powers and scanning all things, weighing them as a jeweller weighs his gems and gold, answered me: "There is nothing!"

But Ananda, voicing the thought in all their minds, said to him: "Yet would not there rise in you grief and dismay if the Blessed One entered Nirvana?"

And after silence Dhammasenapati answered this question also. "No, not even if I should see the Blessed One never again would there rise in me grief and dismay! Nevertheless, Ananda"—and he sighed—"within me my mind says earnestly: 'O may not that Sun go yet to its setting! May not the Tathāgata, that brahmin of brahmins, the Enlightened and the Opener of the Way of Enlightenment to others, be taken from my sight!'"

They left Dhammasenapati then, in his reed-hut at Nalanda.



All these years, in a hut like his, Yasodhara the Lord's wife lived at the entrance to the City of Rajgaha. When the Assembly drew to-

gether under the Vulture's Peak, before the breaking of the Rains, and the Lord in presence of many people Turned the Wheel of the Doctrine, then Yasodhara the King's daughter sat apart and hidden among them all, and listened. Once a year Rahula her son had speech with her; the Tathāgata she saw not. For who that with agony of mind and straining of sinews has snapped strong bonds will endure that they be again fastened on the body?

As the Lord went again towards the Vulture's Peak, he said privately: "Ananda, the time has come when Yasodhara the Mother of Rahula must Cross the Stream."

"Will not the Lord have speech with her?" asked Ananda, and his limbs shook as he said this.

Within the Lord's eyes came again that shadow which Ananda and Moggallana had seen, in the years that were finished; and by silence he gave assent.

They found in her hut of reeds Yasodhara the Mother of Rahula—an old woman, her head shaven, her features shrunk, her body wasted and its light as a lamp whose oil is done. Trembling she tried to rise, but her strength had gone. The Lord upheld her, and she said:

*"Thy servant has fulfilled her Lord's commands;
My love and loyalty are in his hands;
The heavy load I bore I lay on earth;
In me is found no more root of rebirth."*

With these words died Yasodhara the daughter of a king.

The Lord stooped low, and closed her eyes; and over her face drew her robe, laying first her hands across her bowl clasped to her breast. And he said:

*"Youth from her limbs has gone, light from her eyes,
Yet on a mountain peak this pilgrim lies!
Leaning upon her staff she left the vale
And climbed to crags where eagles' spirits quail!
Her saffron cloak no more this beggar needs;
Sunlight and rain alike this princess heeds;
Over this worn-out body sweeps the breath
Of Freedom, and she wins her peace by death."*

Ananda thought: "She called her burden heavy." Sighingly he thought also: "Heavy she found it. Yet would she have spoken so if she had attained salvation?"

Kana thought: "She has died where she would have lived."

There were those who said that in the forest darkness where the Lord wandered lonely they saw shapes of ghost and demon glide out and speak with him. For all beings marvelled, in this dawn of Enlightenment! What wonder that they should throng to hear a Man who had done what the Gods had achieved not, and had opened a Path of Salvation?

All things knew also that the time was at hand when the Tathāgata would enter Nirvana. The time was at hand, the time was brief, it was passing swiftly. All things are transient; the Mind that knows, no less than the flitting thought that is "known" by it.

Moggallana said: "It is not with spirits that he speaks. They are but emanations from the earth and air around us. Many thoughts there are which come from no consciousness and attain to none. Yet are they in this world! The Lord's perception gives them shape and power of speech."

Others said: "They are the Gods we know. Indra and Brahma have become the Lord's disciples."

Setting all things now in order, the Lord said: "I go north, Ascetics." With five hundred monks accompanying, he came to Nalanda.

At Nalanda, Kana said to the Lord: "Moggallana and Ananda have gone to Dhammasenapati, who to-night will Cross the Stream. Let the Blessed One give me leave, that I may be with them."

The Lord said: "Go, Disciple."

Kana went therefore, and in the darkened hut, night having fallen, he sat with his friends at Dhammasenapati's side. They neither heard nor saw the Blessed One join them, but towards morning they looked up and saw him.

At that moment the dying man saw him also. By the flickering light of the torch in Ananda's hand they saw Dhammasenapati's eyes rest on each of them in turn. Then they ended where they began, on the Lord's face. The withered palms slowly lifted and came together.

"Lord," said the dying man in a whisper, "I take refuge—in thee. I take refuge—in the Law. I take refuge" (his hands dropped with heaviness, and Ananda and Moggallana took them in

their own) "in the Assembly." There was a long sigh, as of a bird's wings coming to rest, and Dhammasenapati's head fell forward.

Panchkori gathered together staff and bowl, and set them beside the body.



Next day the Lord expounded the Vanishing of Fire Which We Have Seen.

"Where, Lord," asked the younger disciples, "has Dhammasenapati our father been reborn?"

"That word—*reborn*—applies not to him."

"Then," said they astonished, "he has attained eternal not-being! He has not been reborn!"

"That also—*not* being reborn—applies not to the *arahat*."

A brahmin who was present (one who had not even Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream) said angrily: "To every question you answer merely: 'This word does not apply!' Who can understand such a teacher?"

"Certainly not those", said the Tathāgata, "who think that the Doctrine is to be snared with the first quick words on which the tongue lays

hold. Deep is the Doctrine, and with depths beyond depths where no man has plunged his plummet. As the sea has shallows where a child can walk—and also gulfs where the Three Worlds would hardly be seen! So is the Doctrine; it lies beyond dialectic. I ask *you* therefore, brahmin, a question—you may answer it as you choose! If before you were a fire would you know it?"

"I should. And I should say: 'This is fire.' "

"And if one asked you: 'In what strength does this fire blaze?' what would you answer?"

"I should say", said the brahmin laughing, "that such a questioner thought he was playing with a child. That of course the sticks were the strength which made it blaze!"

"And if the fire ceased, would you know it had ceased?"

"Certainly I should know. To what does all this foolery tend?"

"Have patience, brahmin. I had some with thee! Supposing some one asked: 'In what direction has this fire which has vanished gone? There are Ten Directions. Has it gone upward? or downward? or east? west? south? north?'"

"It would be a silly question and wrongly put. The fire was fed with fuel, and since that

fuel has been wasted utterly into ashes which have no strength or substance, and since no other fuel has been added to it, we say: 'This fire has ceased because of want of fuel to keep it alight.' It has gone nowhere."

"Even so, brahmin, from Sariputta all that sustained the fire of life—feelings and perceptions, vision, hearing, touch, strength, consciousness—all these things have gone. Therefore of my *arahat* we use not the terms *born* or *not born*. He has passed into the ocean of being, without bounds or bottom—profound, immeasurable! As the fire which has gone from the fuel that is eaten away has returned into the fire that is invisible yet everywhere!"

"And that fire still exists," said Moggallana; and by the look in the Tathāgata's eyes saw that he had said well.

"All rivers, brahmin," said the Tathāgata, "end in the sea which no man can plumb. Yet do not the sea's waters acquire increase! Neither in a season of drought do those waters suffer diminution! Even so, though millions on millions of *arahats* melt into the white brilliance of Nirvana, withdrawn from our sight into that eternal stillness, yet does not Nirvana know either increase or lessening thereby. No torch

glimmers in that kingdom, no candle is lit there! The sun shines not, the moon shines not, the stars shine not, nor is there darkness there. In that invisible eternal flame is neither fire nor water, earth nor air! All things are free from form or formlessness, from pain or delight. So are the *arahats* who have attained Nirvana."

"Do the Lord's words", asked Ananda, "imply that the *arahat* feels and knows no longer?"

Kana also asked the same question. All those ascetics, assenting, said: "We would have this question resolved if we may."

"How think you, Ananda? Even in this existence have you found your true self? Lives there no false self—nothing that masks and deceives, and to the world—yes, and to your own selves also—says vilely: 'I am this man in truth, and looking on me you see his very self?' "

"There *is* such a false self," admitted Ananda. "And my whole life is spent in seeking to eject him from this House of Nine Doors into which he has brought wretchedness."

"You know also dreams, weariness, sickness, faintness. Even in this life—is life, O Ascetics, fully *alive*?"

Then those Ascetics confessed that it was not.

"Yesterday is but a dream in our minds, and who can remember what things he said or thought or did, at such and such an hour not ten days gone?" said Ananda. "And to-day also is fading into dream even while it seems to be with us."

"Why then ask: 'Is the *arahat* still living?' When even here you know but a half-life that slays itself minute by minute! But I would ask you one question further. Kana, when I found thee, a boy in bonds, was thy life then one of full alertness and consciousness? Or thee, Sunita, a sweeper together of garlands? Or thee?"—and he named many of them, brahmins and merchants and others.

Kana said: "Hour by hour, as I have walked the Noble Eightfold Path, have I known within me—strengthening as passion died, and as lust and desire grew weak—a self that sometimes seems to me a giant which nothing in the Three Worlds can slay! My life has been within me as a day waxing to noontide—not as one that was fading out in the mists and dust of evening!" He spoke slowly, looking back over the years. "It is for this reason that I find it hard to think that when I Cross the Stream I shall walk into annihilation and silence, Lord."

The Lord smiled. "Why, thou thyself hast found in thyself the answer to the brahmin's question and the question of these ascetics and thyself! Nevertheless, Disciples, ask not such questions! They are profitless, questions which none can answer. Who that has once died has spoken again? And all this, O Ascetics—tormentings of the mind concerning the Gods and things invisible, or concerning rebirth and where this disciple is who has died and that one who died long since—it is but vain and empty scattering of strength. Follow the Noble Eightfold Path. It will bring you to peace in this life, with no rebirth into sorrow and pain hereafter. And for the rest, let Him see to it in whose hands it has been from the beginning! We are they who have gone in search of ourselves, and when that search is ended the fruit of it will come of itself—as the fruit comes on the tree when flowering and ripening have done their work."

That night Moggallana said privately: "I come to take the dust of the Lord's feet for the last time. When he goes northward again to-morrow, I must remain here. And for me my friend's hut, which is empty, will serve; there needs no other preparation."

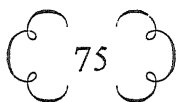
So he took the dust of the Lord's feet and they parted.

Yet before he went, to him and Ananda and Kana, these three, did the Lord expound the Truth of the Eternal Witness. "Say not, Ascetics, 'All is dark, nothing is known!' Within each one of you is a witness who watches and listens."

"His form is dim and his speech hard to hear," said Moggallana.

"Yes, but only the fool says: 'Because I see but dimly, there is nothing to see!' The wise man has patience, and says: 'Though I see dimly, I see! and I will remember I have seen.' By this witness we know that somewhere is One who sent this witness, and from his witness will seek a report when this House of Nine Doors lies beaten down and broken. Therefore in all you

do act as men who are not alone, but stand in the presence of a watcher who does not sleep.”



They came to a place where King Ajatasattu was building a fortress. Then said the Tathāgata: “The world is full of war and gatherings for war. War is in the minds of men, and in the trampling of footmen and the clattering of horsemen. I leave a world that is weary of quietness and makes ready for slaughter.” As he said this, his eyes and hands were weary, and his body drooped.

To Ananda he said, when he rose early next morning: “Who, Ananda, are building this great fortress?”

Ananda, surprised, said: “King Ajatasattu and his ministers and generals.”

“No, they are but the servants of forces they see not. Others are building this mighty fortress. And the workings of river and earth and air—Ganges sweeping by full of majesty, the waving fields behind us, the pleasant air above—will bring it about that here will be a great city, the

greatest of all cities in this kingdom, famous among the places to which merchants resort. Yet will there be over it three dangers, Ananda, of fire and water and foolish dissension among its citizens." And the Tathāgata's eyes and hands grew weary, and his body drooped.

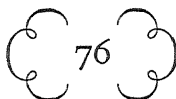
The monks that heard his words said: "It is known that this place is a haunt from the beginning of spirits and demons! When night falls their torches glimmer on the wide sands beside Ganges! And wherever there are spirits of exceeding power, there they sway the hearts of kings and mighty generals to build, just as spirits whose power is slight sway the hearts of poor and mean folk to build in the places where they haunt! It is easy to see why the Blessed One knew that one day there would be a mighty city in this place!"

The Lord hearing these words heard them not. He said to those ascetics who were still with him: "All things wax old, Ascetics. I too am old and close to death. Work out the soul's freedom, working diligently! At the end of three months I must die.

*My years draw to an end, my life must close,
My spirit on myself its burden throws.
Be watchful, monks! In thought be earnest still!*

Guard well your hearts! Be calm and strong of will!

*He that unwearying holds this duty firm
Shall cross life's sea and make of grief a term.*



At Vesali came to him again Devadatta his cousin, falsely in guise of humility and love, saying: "I have been at the court of King Ajatasattu, Turning the Wheel of the Law. He has Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream. By a king's accession great gain will come to the Order, of buildings and influence."

"Where are now the Five Stringent Rules?" the Lord thought, but said no word to this disciple.

"Those also that are the King's friends will do much good, and from fear many will become monks and this Doctrine will overspread the world."

"Poison like a flood will overspread the world," the Lord thought, sitting in silence as he hearkened; and his eyes and hands grew weary, and his body drooped.

“Therefore,” said Devadatta, “seeing that I am King Ajatasattu’s friend and have brought so great a king to Attain to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream——”

“And seeing also?” asked the Blessed One.

“Seeing also that the Tathāgata is now old and cannot walk abroad as was his wont, Turning the Wheel in all men’s sight, it is good that now he cease to be the Chief of this Order, and that I his cousin become their leader.”

Since the Blessed One made no answer, Devadatta then said: “Will Gotama, seeing that he is now old and useless, deliver over his Order to me who am strong and full of vigour, and moreover am King Ajatasattu’s friend?”

“Not to thee, Devadatta, not to thee,” replied the Blessed One.

So Devadatta went away angry, saying to himself: “I will found my own Order, and the King will be with us.” But to Ananda the Lord said: “In his face I marked the Seven Signs of Death, by which I know surely that in a little while this cloud will pass.” These words Ananda remembered when tidings came that Devadatta was dead.

Next day arising early, the Lord put on his robe and took his bowl, and entered Vesali, asking alms. Having received from good householders alms of rice and dried fruit he came out from the city, and sat down and ate his meal. When he had finished he gazed at that city with elephant gaze—his whole body turned one way, as though in that look his being went forward—and he said: “Ananda, this is the last time that I shall look on Vesali.” After a time, rising, he said: “Let us go to Bhandagam.”

Word had gone abroad that the Tathāgata was about to Cross the Stream, and a great gathering of the brethren went with him slowly and sadly forward. In the village they rested for the night.

The Lord expounded here the Discourse of Not Understanding.

“It is because of Not Understanding, Ascetics, that we are compelled to wander so many ages in this weary road of birth on birth, an endless sorrow and burden! Ahai! it was because of not understanding that I also wandered in it so long!

“Many are called wise whose wisdom is folly or

concerned with worthless things: many are called free in whose minds and wills is only bondage: many are deep in thought, which is thought only for the things that die and vanish: many pass their years in such manner that those years might not have been, for no good has come because they have been.

“By understanding we raise ourselves, as a sick man raises himself by the help of friends!”



They came to a mighty peepul-tree, and the Lord said: “It was under a peepul-tree that I Attained Enlightenment, Ananda. Let us rest here.” His eyes and hands grew weary, and his body drooped.

He said also: “Seven years I wasted, foolish one that I was! in pains and torments laid on this body that served me! Weak and emaciated it became, and my mind at times was faint with dimness. At last I said: ‘Mind, this is a way that leads thee in endless circles! Either there is in this universe a truth which can save thee, or there is none, and it is foolishness to spend exis-

tence thus!' And within me answered a voice that said clearly and firmly: 'There is a truth, Ascetic! There is a truth! Strive this day until thou find it!'

"That night therefore, in the flowery fullness of the month Vaisakh, I sat under the tree which I had found, and I said thus to mind and body: 'Mind and body, here shall you stay until I have found that truth! Though skin and sinews and bone and marrow dry up and perish, though my blood cease to flow, here will I sit until I know the truth that saves me!'

"Nine and forty days had I passed without food, and my body was weak but my mind unclouded and firm!

"To me then came Mara and his hosts of evil, and he tried me all ways that he knew. But I heeded them not; I would see only the truth that upheld all things.

"Mara the Evil One said: 'Sir, thou hast been a mighty ascetic! In all the ages there has been no ascetic equal to thee! Thou hast now an ascetic's powers. Call to thee the Gods who must serve thee, and bid them do great wonders!'

"To myself I said, diving deeply into the years that were over, 'What good have these seven years of emaciation and torment done to any

that live in the Three Worlds? Foolish ones have come to gape and wonder; some have laughed, some have praised me; but themselves they have not followed my path. Is the mind at rest because of what I have endured? Is any God that sees me pleased because of it? Is sorrow less or wisdom more?

"Still Mara whispered: 'Sir, thou hast been a mighty ascetic! In all the ages there has been no ascetic equal to thee!'

"To Mara I answered: 'Sir, I have been a mighty fool. In all the ages there has been no fool equal to me. All these years I have striven to catch the wind in a net, to tie the wandering air into knots! I will leave wind and air to themselves, and will do what my mind instructs me to do!'

" 'Not from personal sorrow hast thou left thy home for the homeless life,' then said my mind to me. 'Thy life was full of sweetness, if all that was in thy heart was thine own path! Thy wife was a princess, lovely of person and mind, and full of love; thy father a king whom all own as truly kingly: thy son had been born. This thy body was as yet that of a young man, and no weakness had touched it!'

"Not for my own personal sorrow, monks,

did I seek the homeless existence. With the Eye of Pity beholding all things, I saw that age on age, in birth following birth, endlessly renewed, all beings were tossed in the sea of lust and passion and the grief they bring. This world that passes away, whose yesterday is already as a dream, Ascetics, this world is the thing that drew their desire and for whose gifts they strove! All things were illusion, save the mind only (and who knows whence that mind came and whither it goes?). It is a different wave, but the same ocean, age on age, birth following birth, endlessly renewed! How shall one be freed from this sorrow whose beginning no man remembers, whose end no man can see? So did I strive there, consumed with pity for all that lives!

“Then within me spoke that voice which had sent me to this conflict, saying: ‘Desire is the root of sorrow. Self is the root of sorrow. It is because a man says: “I am I, and these others are not-I,” that he seeks what causes him misery if he wins it not. Because we say: “I am I and these others are not-I—some of them, my wife or my sons, are indeed in part I, and therefore their good also must in part be striven for”—because of this thought men go their way through the world

and through life like raging fires that bring destruction. They slay and hurt, they are a curse to all this creation in which God has set them!' These words said the voice within me.

"And I asked: 'If I accept this word, does it bring with it freedom?' And my heart leapt up in assurance. 'Yes, yes, it brings freedom! Accept it, Ascetic!' And I saw that if I looked on all men and women alike as my own, on Rahula my son——"

He paused; and in all these years Ananda, who was nearest to the Lord, heard him speak of Rahula his son thrice only, and this was the third and last time. He was to all men alike the Moon of love and pity, to the monk that had newly Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Crossing the Stream and to Rahula his own son, to both alike!

The Tathāgata said: "If I looked on all as my own, and on myself as something whose end I knew not (but its transiency I knew), then was I freed from desire for ever. If desire were rooted out utterly, pain also would be rooted out. That life, O Ascetics, which has cast out love of self, to which pain and joy are things indifferent, and even sickness and weakness things which pass and must come to all, that life abides in freedom!

The lotus is not stained by water, though that water be full of filth and foulness; nor is this life stained by the world, Ascetics! And, as I saw that I myself was my own burden, and that for all beings this life which I called my own must be spent to the uttermost, to bring to all deliverance—in that moment I knew that Ignorance had died within me. Insight was born in its stead, and my heart leapt up with such wildness of rapture that even now to remember it fills this aged body with joy such as it knew not even when it was young and like a deer of the woods! This, Ascetics, is *joy*—when the mind knows that all its chains are broken, and that in the Three Worlds there is no power that can drive it back into those chains!”

Ananda asked: “Does not the Blessed One fear this joy?”

The Lord answered: “No! No! This joy will I not fear! Rather let me be filled with it, so that there be room for nothing but itself!”

Next morning, as they journeyed forward, Ananda went with pausings and lookings back, till the Lord said: "Say all that is in thy mind, Ananda."

Ananda, hesitating, said: "The Blessed One is making his way to desolate places, and where only hamlets are."

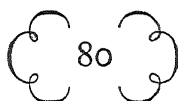
"In such places, O Ananda, have I known my deepest peace. 'Those are the groves wherein my soul exults!'"

"Yet to me it seems not well that the Lord should pass away in such places. Let it be in some great city where many may see and be converted! It is not fitting that the Blessed One should die where only his disciples and a few simple folk shall know of it! This is but a place of daub and stick and wattle!"

The Lord answered: "In the dawn when I Attained Enlightenment, after I had bathed myself in the Phalgu river I rested under a nigrodha tree. Mara the Evil One, like my shadow following me, said: 'Sir, now is the time to leave this existence. You have Attained Enlightenment! Now is the time to pass away!' And I

answered: 'I shall choose my own time, friend Mara, or rather, this body will choose it for me!' To-day, Ananda, Mara (whom I had not heard from these many years!) repeated the old foolishness, first by his own lips and then by the lips of my own dear comrade! And I have told him: 'Be pacified, silly and busy one! I shall die presently! Now return to thy disciples and find thyself an audience which desires thee!' "

To those of his disciples who asked: "Sir, how shall we perform your obsequies?" the Lord replied: "As you will or as others will. I shall not be watching them."



He spoke also the Discourse of Old Age. "How is it that there is joy and laughter, in a world that is always afire? And those who live in deep darkness, how is it that they seek not a light?

"Once I was young, I was richly dressed, I rode on strong and lovely horses, I sat in gilded seats. Men said that the King's son looked like a world-ruler, and was a body goodly to gaze

on. But now this body is wasted, it is full of weakness and pain. It is a lump of frailty, dressed up in a yellow robe!

“Youth has a fortress of swift strong bones! The flesh and blood seem clean and pure! But within lurk age and dying, like robbers waiting their time! Last of all the fire will end all, save a few white bones bleaching and crumbling! And what joy is there in looking on those white bones—like gourd shells thrown on the rubbish pile when the housewife has taken their meat for her curry!

“The painted chariots of kings are destroyed. This body, Ascetics, which men deck with such care, it is itself a chariot bearing itself unpausingly to its own destruction!

“Pleasure, the trout for which thou didst so vigilantly angle, has been borne away by an osprey thou didst not see! If it is for pleasure only that thou hast cared all thy life, thou art now like a feeble and aged heron, standing bleakly in a pond where no fish are!

“Then the man who has let desire sway him all the days of his youth and manhood will lie like a broken bow, sighing for the years that have gone—with death’s wind whistling through its useless strings!”

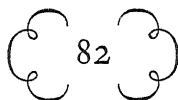
He said again: "This body, Ascetics, is broken."



Taking with him Kana and Ananda, the Lord walked slowly in the sephali woods of Amravati. Scooping together a handful of orange-throated flowers from the carpet strewn by night under the bushes, he breathed deep of their fragrance. Then he confronted with elephant gaze the wilderness, and said: "I and my friends, we have lived in many places! How full of joy was Rajgaha! How full of joy the Vulture's Peak! How full of joy the Tree where I Attained Enlightenment, and the wayside banyans where we have rested! The Robbers' Cave to which Panchkori took us! And the caves on the side of the hill Vebhara! The copse of Sitavana! The Tapoda grove! And Veluvan, the Bamboo Grove! And the Squirrels' place of feeding, where they came to our hands! And the Mango-Grove of Ambapali! And the wide shady spaces by Niranjala, the river which all men who see it must love for ever! And Mad-

dakuchchhi's deer forest! How full of sweetness the days and nights which we have known! The full moon under which I have walked all night! The whiteness and silence of the sun setting in wild places! The thunder and madness of the rain! The coming of the black bee and the month of flowers! And Vaisakh, the month in which I Found Enlightenment! No! No!" the Blessed One said, with tones as of a trumpet that sounds defiance to all who dare gainsay its utterance. "I will *not* fear this rapture!"

And with elephant gaze looking steadfastly before him he said: "This is the last time, Ascetics, that I shall look upon this place."



They went on to Pava, and in a mango-grove the Tathāgata rested. When Chunda the smith heard this, he came to Ananda and asked: "May such an one as I enter the Lord's presence?"

Ananda led him therefore, and Chunda bowing low took the dust of the Lord's feet and humbly sat on one side, keeping the Lord on his

right. At the end of the Lord's discourse he asked: "Will the Lord and his disciples take their meal with me to-morrow?"

The Lord by silence assented.

Chunda arose and went home, keeping the Lord on his right. Early next day, having toiled all night to prepare a worthy meal, he sent word: "All is ready. Let the Blessed One come."

Now Chunda, being a man ignorant and of low caste, had made ready abundance of sweetened cakes and rice and also dried pork. Ananda privately said to the Blessed One: "He has prepared for thee dry pork!"

The Lord answered: "He has done it in ignorance, not knowing the Law. And what he has done in ignorance let us receive in ignorance, lest a poor man be put to shame!" Aloud he said: "Chunda, I will eat of thy dried pork, and let my disciples have the sweetened rice and cakes." To Ananda he said privately: "The mind no longer sees what the body does. A man who has scaled a high mountain no longer sees the stone on which he stumbled when first he began to climb. Set thy heart at rest therefore, my good Ananda!"

Chunda the smith, gladdened in his mind, thought: "The Blessed One desires my dried

pork!" He served him with happiness; and at the end of the meal he stood before him, asking to be blessed.

The Lord, having eaten of the pork, blessed him, and said (for he saw Chunda gazing at the pork which had not been eaten): "Whatever pork is here, Chunda, let it be buried. I see no one in the Three Worlds—neither here nor in Mara's heaven, in Brahma's heaven nor Indra's—among lower caste men or among brahmins, among mortals or gods or ghosts or demons—no one, friend Chunda, except I myself, who could digest this pork of thine."

So Chunda, thinking: "This food is very sacred, for of it the Lord has eaten, and it is not fit that any other should eat of it!" buried the rest of the pork. Then he took his seat with the brethren. Listening to the Lord's discourse, he Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream.

But that day, about noon, on the Lord came a sharp and terrible sickness. All this pain the Lord endured, having his mind in full possession and control.

He left the path and lay down under a tree, and to Ananda he said: "I beseech you, Ananda, fold my robe and put it under me. I am tired,

and must rest." His eyes and hands grew weary, and his body drooped.

Ananda made the robe fourfold and spread it, and the Lord lay on his side. "I am thirsty, Ananda, and would drink."

It was at a place of crossing, and the river was low. Ananda said therefore: "Presently, Lord. But now carts have just passed the stream, and it is all disturbed and muddy."

The Lord lay in pain silent, and after a while said as before: "Ananda, I pray you, some water."

But Ananda saw that carts were still crossing the stream.

The Lord said again: "O Ananda, Ananda, what do mud or foulness matter now? Fetch me some water."

So Ananda brought it, and the Blessed One drank and rested.

After long silence he said: "Ananda, I am thinking of Chunda the smith."

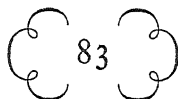
"Others have been thinking of him also," said Ananda.

"It is for that reason that I am thinking of him! I foresee that some of my monks will go to him, and will say: 'By thy meal our Master died. That dried pork was the last food he ate.' After I am dead go thou to him first, and say: 'From the

Tathāgata's own mouth I heard these words: "There are two gifts in my life which were blessed above all others—that of food which was given me the night before I Attained Enlightenment, and this food which Chunda the smith gave me. Therefore let not Chunda the smith know even so much as one rice seed of remorse and sorrow." " "

Seeing Ananda hesitate, the Blessed One said: "Then, if Ananda will not say it, I lay it as a charge on Panchkori."

"I will say it," said Ananda.



He rose up, and walking slowly and with pain said: "Let us go to the other side of this stream, to the sal wood of the Mallas at Kusinara."

They reached the sal wood, in a place where before them opened the high peaks of Himalaya and about them the air blew chill from the snows. In this place (with before him the high peaks and a wind blowing ever from them) the Lord took his posture between two sal-trees—

as a lion he lay on his right side. Some of the monks said: "It is not good for the Blessed One to lie here, where the air sparkles with frost! A little farther we shall find a screen between him and those mountains." But he replied: "Those are the mountains which I remember, and it is here that I have chosen to die."

Ananda went from him then, into the brethren's monastery there, and leaning his head against the door wept, thinking: "I remain but a disciple! My mind still clings to the shows of this world, it is not that of the *arahats* who have gone. And the Blessed One is about to leave me—my Master who has been so kind!"

At that hour the Blessed One, looking up, asked: "Where is Ananda?"

"He is inside the monastery," they told him. "He leans against the door, screened from sight, weeping."

"Go, Panchkori, and bring him back. Tell him in my name: 'Ananda, the Tathāgata wants thee.'"

When Ananda came, the Lord bade him sit down, and he said: "Have I not told you, often and often, Ananda, that all things are impermanent? Have I not explained that it is from the things that are closest to us, to which the mind

leaps out in desire and affection, that we must sever ourselves most earnestly? For it is these things whose loss will one day afflict us with pain unbearable—unless before that day comes we have detached ourselves from them!”

“You have so told me, and so explained to me,” Ananda admitted.

“For many years, Ananda, you have been with me, and of all my disciples have been nearest to me, with acts of love and service that have never changed and have been beyond all utterance. You have spoken words of kindness only—in all these years never once have you even thought: ‘This Master of mine is a burden and I feel weary!’ I say this, Ananda, that my spirit may not go hence without this witness! Now remain earnest and constant; and you too are closer to Fullness of Attainment than you have ever imagined!”

To the brethren the Lord said: “In Ananda, Ascetics, there have been and are four wonderful qualities. What are they?”

“One of them I know,” said Kana. “If any of us come to see him or speak with him, happiness springs up when we find him!”

“Kana has spoken truly,” said the Lord. “In Ananda are these four wonderful qualities.

When the brethren hear him speak, their minds are joyful; when he is silent, they feel there is some loss and their minds are disquieted. So is it also when the sisters hear him; and when the sisters find him silent.”

All that night the Blessed One Turned the Wheel of the Law before his disciples, lying in the lion posture under the two sal-trees. Many others came also, and were instructed. Among them was a brahmin who wandered from place to place, vainly afflicting his mind and body with torments. He said when he had heard the Doctrine: “Lord, I would stay with you and minister to you always.” “You offer service,” the Lord answered, “to him who needs it not. But he that shall minister to those who are sick and wretched shall minister to me.” Then Subaddha the wandering brahmin Attained to Eat of the Fruit of Entering the Stream. He was the last to whom the Lord gave salvation.

As the day was breaking the Blessed One said: “It may happen that before this day ends some of you will be saying: ‘The Lord has gone from us, and we have no teacher.’ Ananda, I think, may be saying this—and—and—others. But thinking thus, Ananda, you would be in error. The Noble Eightfold Path, by being trod-

den, itself brings instruction. When I am gone, let the Rules and the Assembly be your teachers.”

Presently he said: “Perchance in some brother’s mind even now is misgiving or uncertainty concerning the Noble Eightfold Path. Ask me now freely. Let it not be that to-night you will say: ‘Our Master was with us, and we saw him face to face, and we withheld ourselves from asking him concerning this.’ ”

Three times he asked this, and each time no one spoke.

Finally Ananda said: “This is of all things matter for astonishment! Lord, I firmly believe that in this whole company of the brethren there is not one brother who has any misgiving or uncertainty concerning the Lord, the Doctrine, or the Assembly. Thy work, Lord, is truly finished, having opened the Truth and the Noble Eightfold Path.”

“You have spoken from faith, Ananda! But what you believe I myself *know*! Looking on you my disciples for the last time, I *know* that none of you entertains the least misgiving or doubt! Each has his feet on the Noble Eightfold Path!”

Raising himself, he looked on the high white mountains. They heard him sigh as with deep

contentment and peace within him. He spoke the Hymn of the Shattered Dwelling.

*“House after house has held me in its prison!
On endless errand sent,
Birth following birth I ran a weary course—
Seeking still the Maker of this Tent—
This tabernacle which from me falls!
Whose roof lets in death’s rain! Dust are its walls!*

*Painful was birth on birth! Shame and remorse
Seized on me as I wandered!
An endless lore I pondered!
Now at last
Birth and rebirth are passed!
Now is the captive risen!*

*Yes, Maker of this house! Thou hast been seen!
The rafters smashed, the roof-tree tumbled,
The mortised shell to powder crumbled,
Thou cunning hider, I have gripped thee fast!
And never shalt thou raise again
This body fashioned out of ignorance and pain!
I reach the end of suffering and desire!
For all eternity dies out this fire!”*

He sank again to the lion posture, and his breath came slowly. Yet once more he spoke, saying: “O Ascetics, all things are decay and passing! O Ascetics, remember this truth! With

humbleness and earnestness, looking ever to the end, work out for yourselves your freedom!"



Into deep meditation passing, and thence into the second and third and final stages of meditation, the Lord entered into that infinity where only infinity existed; and out of that rose into higher infinity where only thought existed: and out of that into a state from which all consciousness of feeling and thought had vanished.

And Ananda spoke, saying: "The Lord is dead."

But Anuruddha rebuking him answered gently: "He is not dead. He has entered that condition where feelings and thought exist no longer."

Watching him awhile, at last they knew that all was over. When they knew this, some of the brethren, being not yet free of illusion, fell on the ground and rolled to and fro, and burst into loud weeping.

But Ananda and Panchkori and others who were free of illusion said to themselves and to

these others: "All things are impermanent, Ascetics. The mind that is cleansed of passion knows this, and it says: 'This was of necessity, that the Blessed One should leave us. How was it possible that it should be otherwise?' "

Then those Ascetics ceased to behave thus shamefully, and cleansed their minds of passion and became calm. Word was sent out that the Lord had died.

Beside the river, on its wide dry sands, the monks burned the body, each one walking thrice with clasped hands round the pyre, and then uncovering the Lord's feet and bowing in reverence before them. The Mallas of Kusinara, afterwards gathering the ashes, for seven days paid them honour with music and singing and dancing, with garlands and scented waters, keeping them in their council house, inside a fence of spears and bows set like a rampart. For they remembered that he had been a king's son.

Last of all the Lord's ashes were divided into eight portions, and sent out to recipients held worthy; and over them each recipient raised a pyramid.

The brethren came then together, and considered concerning the Doctrine. Some said: "We are well rid of that Gotama, whose rules were so hard!" And they went their way. But the most part had wisdom.

Sitting in council, the Assembly asked Ananda: "Venerable Ananda, seeing that you were the Lord's attendant, is there anything which the Lord told you and which you have not told us?"

After thinking awhile, Ananda answered: "There is one thing. The Blessed One, in the days before the end, said: 'Ananda, if the Assembly so desire, let them not vex themselves with the Lesser Rules. Those Rules can go, and it will be no harm.'"

Looking at each other, then the monks asked: "Which rules, Ananda, did the Blessed One have in mind?"

"That", said Ananda, "truly I do not know. It was in my mind to ask, but the Lord lay dying, and I forgot to ask him."

Then said those ascetics: "Forgetfulness is a fault, and for this his forgetfulness Ananda must make confession before us."

Others blamed him also for other heavy faults: that once, when repairing a rent in the Lord's robe, he trod on the robe; that he had let women (who had come first) approach the Lord's body after he was dead, defiling it with their tears; that it was he who had asked the Lord that women might enter the Order. Ananda to all this made answer: "My mind is foolish, so that I see not where I fell into blame in anything of all that you allege. Nevertheless, since I have taken refuge in the Assembly, and since this is the Assembly's decision, I confess my sin and ask forgiveness."



H Having considered well of the Doctrine and the Discipline, the brethren went their way, to Turn the Wheel of the Law throughout all places. And they said: "Each year, at the Coming of the Rains, we will gather, as many of us as are able, to Turn the Wheel in Secret on the Vulture's Peak, as the Lord's custom was."

Ananda and Panchkori standing together,

Panchkori said: "King's nephew, Venerable Ananda, where now will you go?"

Ananda replied: "Wherever I go it is but the one place—now until the end! I have taken refuge in the Lord, and in that refuge death shall find me. But for the present I shall stay where the Lord died." Looking at Kana, he asked: "And you, Panchkori?"

"I go whither the Lord commanded. To the valley where he found me in bonds."

"By Kundalini's waters that flow softly?"

"Even so."

They looked at each other; and in Panchkori's gaze Ananda saw the wilderness and its green stretching sweetness. "Come thou sometimes to abide with me, Ananda," Panchkori begged, "and to instruct me and those whom I shall gather in the caves by Kundalini! Thou wast of all of us closest to the Blessed One, and to thee his mind was opened. Come then! and hearing thee my monks will know it was all as I have told them!"

"I shall come, Brother."

Then those Ascetics took each other's hand, and said: "I take refuge in the Lord. I take refuge in the Law. I take refuge in the Assembly."

After this, they went their separate ways.



